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SPECIAL EDITION

THE LITERATURE OF ALL NATIONS
AND ALL AGES

Julian Hawthorne

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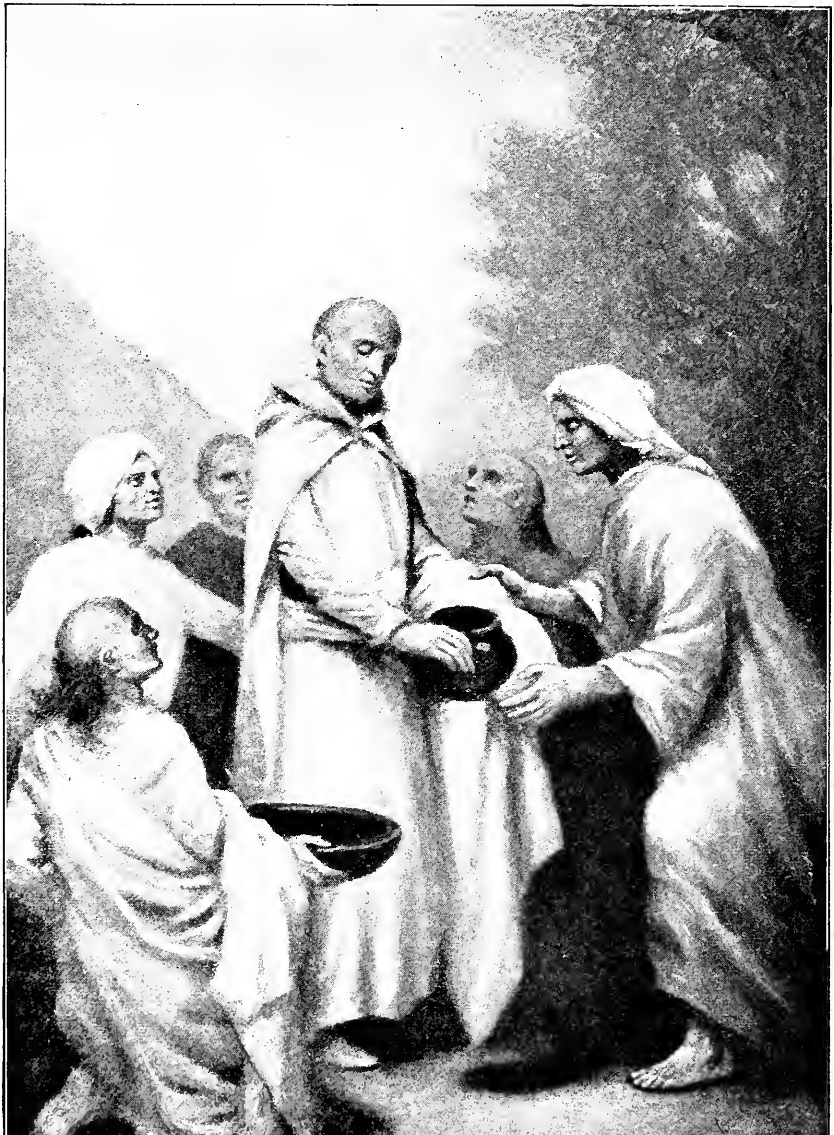
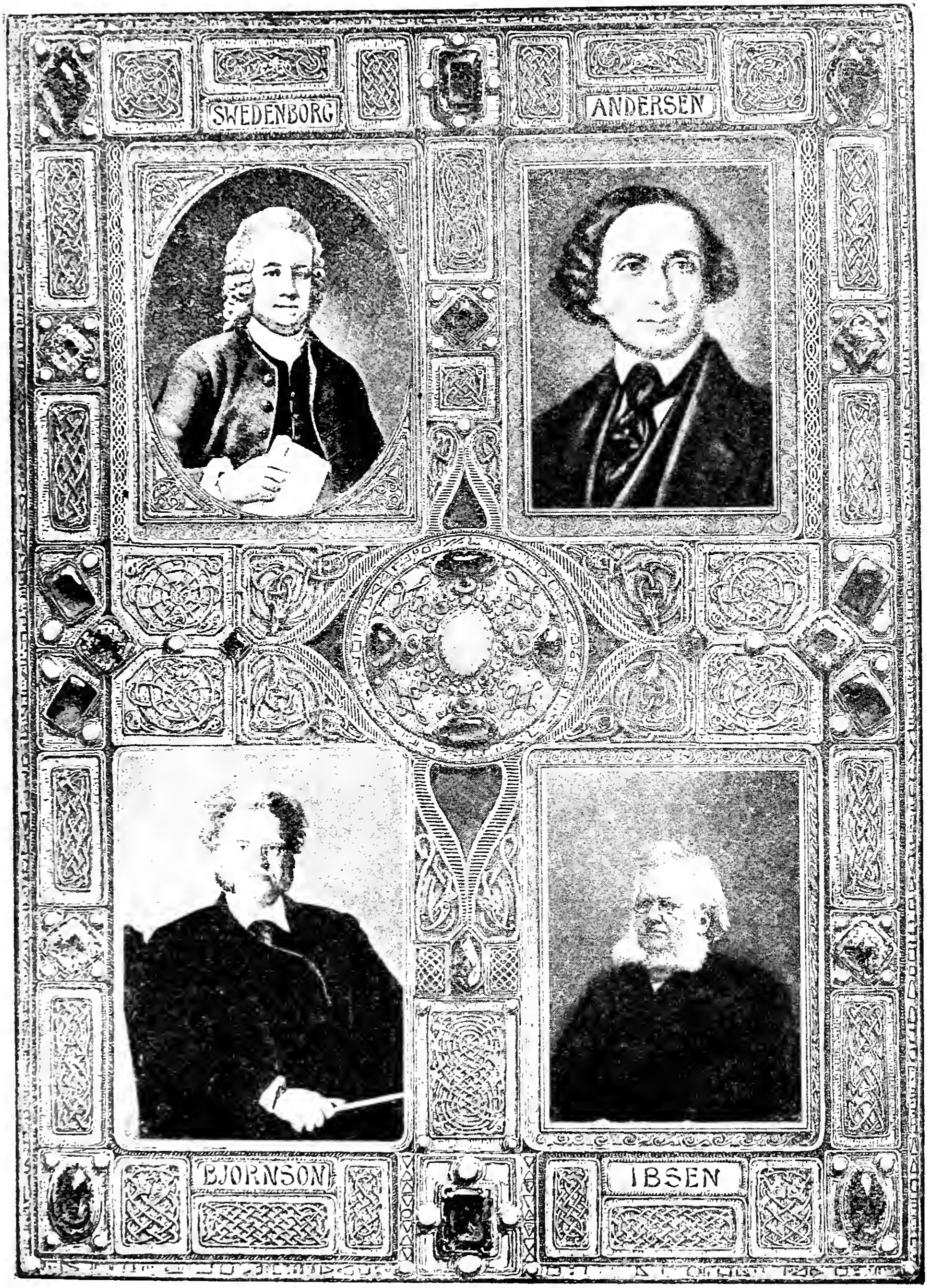


S. J. FERRIS, PINX

BUDDHA AND THE FIVE ASCETICS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THE
LITERATURE OF ALL NATIONS
AND ALL AGES

HISTORY, CHARACTER, AND INCIDENT

EDITED BY

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Member of Parliament, 1879-1899

Author of «HISTORY OF OUR OWN TIMES,» «DEAR LADY DISDAIN,» AND OTHER NOVELS

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VOLUME V

CHICAGO NEW YORK MELBOURNE
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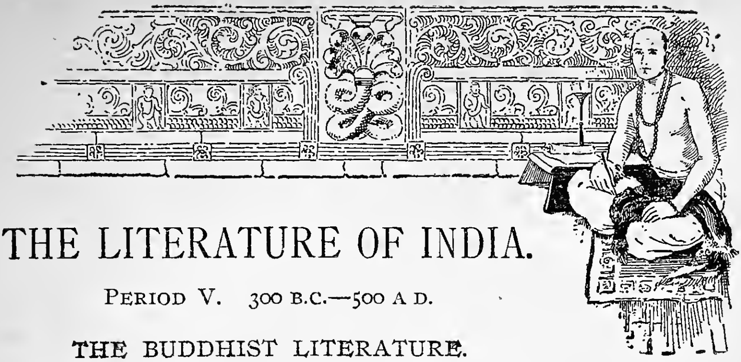


THE LITERATURE OF INDIA.

PERIOD V. 300 B.C.—500 A D.

THE BUDDHIST LITERATURE.

THE early religion of the Aryans was a joyous and childlike nature-worship, but their conquest of meaner races in India produced a pride of birth which eventually led to the sharp and final distinctions of caste. In like manner they were enslaved by the debasing ceremonials of a superstitious priesthood. Yet among them there was always reverence for the self-denying life of the ascetic. Though some philosophic thinkers lost all hope for this world, and looked forward to complete extinction at death, the dominating principle of Brahmanism was the belief in the transmigration of souls. Buddhism, in its essentials, was, more than anything else, a revolt from corrupt Brahmanism. It is the only system of religion known to have been founded by an Aryan teacher. In its ethical aspects, it resembles the doctrines of some modern European philosophers.

Siddhartha Gautama was born about 624 B.C. at Kapilavastu, one hundred miles northeast of Benares, which was at the time the centre of a thickly populated region. Suddhodana, a wealthy prince, the father of Siddhartha, ruled over the tribe of the Sakyas, and his mother, Maya, was celebrated for her beauty and wisdom. Myths and legends cluster so thickly around the birth, early and later life, and even death of Gautama, that it is difficult to pick out the historical details with any accuracy. This much, however, may be gathered: He was brought up in luxury, married to his cousin, became the father of a lovely boy, and was the heir to a rich kingdom. At twenty-nine, according to the story, he became suddenly disenchanted with life because of certain sights which he had seen in a drive along the highways. The memory of these haunted him—neglected old age, loathsome disease, a dead body. But the sight of a dignified ascetic gave him partial relief. After brooding over these things the prince took a sudden resolve, and, rising in the night, fled, without any farewell, from home and inheritance, wife and child. He fled to the forest to work out for himself the problems of age, disease, suffering and death. This is called by the Buddhists "The Great Renunciation." The motive is said to have been overwhelming pity for humanity, fated, according to Brahman belief, to a never-ending succession of birth, life and death.

Retiring to a jungle on the most northerly spur of the Vindhya range of mountains, attended by five ascetics, Gautama for six years gave himself up to self-torture and fasting, until the rigor of the ordeal almost destroyed his life. Then, being convinced that this was not the right path to peace of mind, he resumed eating like other men, and his followers in disgust forsook him and fled. As he sat alone under a Bo-tree, the *ficus religiosa*, or sacred fig-tree, the truth reached him at last and he became a Perfect One, a Buddha, the Enlightened, knowing the cause of suffering and the way of escape. He rejected the Brahman belief in the soul and its endless existence in successive forms. After twenty-eight days spent in meditation and ecstasy, the Buddha arose, donned a yellow robe, and took a mendicant's bowl. Yellow has come to mean the color of wisdom; the Buddha evidently chose it in the deepest humility, as being the color of old rags thrown aside as worthless. In the garb of a mendicant, then, Gautama went back to his old home to preach his doctrine to all who would listen. His father received him with wonder and mortification; his wife and child were among his first followers.

Until he reached an advanced age the Buddha wandered to and fro in the world, teaching his four "Noble Truths" and his eight-fold Path, the following of which would lead to Nirvana, a passive condition of endless peace. He denounced caste, proclaimed the brotherhood of man, and insisted on the duty of right thinking and right living, in contra-distinction to a methodical observance of rites and ceremonies. In this way the disciple, being free from ignorance, would overcome all bodily passions. He would then be an Arahat, or perfect man, victorious over the world and its delusions.

For a long time those who accepted the Buddha's precepts and mode of life were regarded as simply a new school or sect among the Brahmans. The system was, in fact, a new development of views and practices already established. The founder left no writings, but his followers worked out a considerable literature. They recorded his life, his sermons, and finally his miracles. Their influence is traced in portions of the great Sanskrit epics. When the Buddhist doctrines had been widely propagated and had been adopted by some reigning princes, it became necessary to hold a council to decide certain controversies. The council of Vesali, held about 400 B.C., refused to sanction any relaxation of the rules of the order. The second and most celebrated of the councils was called by the Buddhist king, Asoka, at Pataliputa (now Patna), about 250 B.C. It framed a canon of the sacred books.

After some centuries of peaceful intercourse, the Brahmans, aroused by the inherent repugnance of the Buddhist teaching to their own faith, entered upon active persecution of its professors. The Buddhists were driven out of India, in the eighth and ninth centuries, by the Brahmans; and more effectually by the irruption and antagonism of the Mohammedans. The Buddhist religion spread gradually into Ceylon, Burmah, Siam, Tibet, China and Japan, and its manifestations are different in different countries. The Buddhism of Central Asia is a much more complicated system of religion than that of the South. In Tibet, for instance, under the name of "Lamaism," its external forms and ritual are strikingly similar to those of the Roman Catholic church. Buddhism exists in its simplest form in Ceylon. Altogether the Buddhists comprise about one-third of the human race.

According to the simplest system, the believers in Buddha are divided into two sets. The Upasakos are those who take five general vows to perform all their duties righteously and benevolently as members of a family and citizens. They are content to live, but, as a future reward, will attain a favorable re-birth—that is, they will return to this earth under more favorable conditions and on a higher spiritual plane. The Bhikshus, the true followers of the Buddha, renounce the world completely, join the Brotherhood or Sisterhood of the Elect, and attain perfect peace in Nirvana. They escape being born again.

Like other ancient religious teachers, the Buddha taught by conversation only, and left no writings. But his disciples were enjoined to preach to others the truths received from him, and his precepts were remembered and repeated. After his death, but how soon is doubtful, his faithful followers collected and arranged his precious sayings for preservation to future ages.

The sacred books of the Buddhists are the three Pitakas or Baskets. They are written in the Pali dialect of the Sanskrit, but are of uncertain date, yet in general earlier than 250 B.C.

1. The Sutta-Pitaka contains various dialogues and discourses of the Buddha which were intended for the elect and the lay followers; also a number of parables and aphorisms for the further explanation of the doctrine.

2. The Vinaya-Pitaka contains the laws and rules of conduct for the Brotherhood of the Elect.

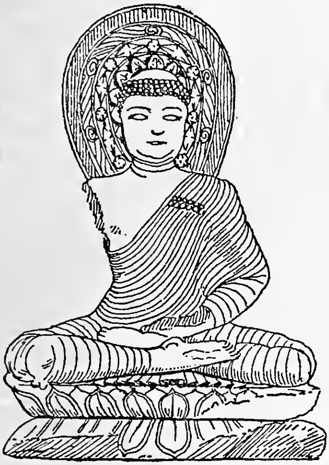
3. The Abidhamma-Pitaka contains religio-philosophical, psychological and metaphysical essays of later time. Part of it consists of refutations of heresies which had already sprung up.

The most interesting part of the scriptures contained in the first book is the Jatakas, or Buddhist Birth-Stories, which comprise parables, fables, fairy stories, maxims, wise, shrewd, humorous, sometimes sarcastic and biting, but always inculcating mercy, justice, purity, and often showing a noble and elevating spirituality.

The best known book of the Buddhists is the Dhammapada, a collection of four hundred and twenty-three verses, mostly culled from their other scriptures, and forming a sort of hymn-book. But a whole literature has gathered around the religion, similar to that connected with the Christian faith—lives of saints, hymns, commentaries, etc.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE KINGDOM OF TRUTH.

THE discourse here given by the Buddha was the beginning of his teaching, and corresponds to Christ's Sermon on the Mount in its relation to Christianity.



The Blessed One, wandering from place to place, came to Benares, to the deer-park Isipatana, to the place where the five recluses were. And the five recluses saw the Blessed One coming from afar; when they saw him they concerted with each other, saying, "Friends, there comes the Gotama, who lives in abundance, who has given up his exertions, and who has turned to an abundant life. Let us not salute him, nor rise from our seats when he approaches, nor take his bowl and his robe from his hands. But let us put there a seat; if he likes, let him sit down."

But when the Blessed One gradually approached near unto those five recluses, they kept not their agreement. They went forth to meet the Blessed One; one took his bowl and his robe, another prepared a seat, a third one brought water for the washing of the feet, a foot-stool and a towel. Then the Blessed One sat down on the seat they had prepared; and when he was seated, the Blessed One washed his feet. Now they addressed the Blessed One by his name, and with the appellation "Friend."

When they spoke to him thus, the Blessed One said to the five recluses: "Do not address, O recluses, the Tathagata by his name, and with the appellation 'Friend.' The Tathagata is the holy, absolute Sambuddha (the Perfectly Enlightened). Give ear, O recluses! The immortal (Amata) has been won by me; I will teach you; to you I preach the doctrine. If you walk in the way I show you, you will, ere long, have penetrated to the truth, having yourselves known it and seen it face to face; and you will live in the possession of that highest goal of the holy life, for the sake of which noble youths fully give up the world, and go forth into the houseless state."

When he had spoken thus, the five monks said to the Blessed One: "By those observances, friend Gotama, by those practices, by those austerities, you have not been able to obtain power surpassing that of men, nor the superiority of full and holy knowledge and insight. How will you now, living in abundance, having given up your exertions, having turned to an abundant life, be able to obtain power surpassing that of men, and the superiority of full and holy knowledge and insight?"

When they had spoken thus, the Blessed One said to the five recluses: "The Tathagata, O recluses, does not live in abundance, he has not given up exertion, he has not turned to an abundant life. The Tathagata is the holy, absolute Sambuddha. Give ear, O recluses; the immortal has been won by me; I will teach you,—to you I will preach the doctrine. If you walk in the way I show you, you will, ere long, have penetrated to the truth, having yourselves known it and seen it face to face; and you will live in the possession of that highest goal of the holy life, for the sake of which noble youths fully give up the world and go forth into the houseless state."

When they had spoken thus three times, the Blessed One said to the five recluses: "Do you admit, O recluses, that I have never spoken to you in this way before this day?"

"You have never spoken so, Lord."

And the Blessed One was able to convince the five recluses; and they listened willingly to the Blessed One; they gave ear, and fixed their mind on the knowledge which the Buddha imparted to them.

And the Blessed One thus addressed them: "There are two extremes, O recluses, which he who hath given up the world ought to avoid. What are these two extremes? First, a life given to pleasures, devoted to pleasures and lusts: this is degrading, sensual, vulgar, ignoble and profitless; and second, a life given to mortifications: this is painful, ignoble and profitless. By avoiding these two extremes the Tathagata has gained the knowledge of the Middle Path which leads to insight, which leads to wisdom, which conduces to calm, to knowledge, to the Sambodhi (Perfect Enlightenment), to Nirvana (Peace).

"Which is this middle path, the knowledge of which the Tathagata has gained, which leads to insight, which leads to wisdom, which conduces to calm, to knowledge, to the Sambodhi, to Nirvana? It is the holy eight-fold Path—namely, Right Belief, Right Aspiration, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Means of Livelihood, Right Endeavor, Right Memory, Right Meditation. This, O recluses, is the Middle Path, the knowledge of which the Tathagata has gained.

"This, O recluses, is the Noble Truth of Suffering: Birth is suffering, decay is suffering, illness is suffering, death is suffering. Presence of objects we hate, is suffering; separation from objects we love, is suffering; not to obtain what we desire, is suffering. Briefly, the five-fold clinging to existence is suffering.

"This is the Noble Truth of the Cause of suffering: Thirst that leads to re-birth, accompanied by pleasure and lust, finding its delight here and there. This thirst is three-fold—namely, thirst for pleasure, thirst for existence, thirst for prosperity.

"This is the Noble Truth of the Cessation of suffering: it ceases with the complete cessation of this thirst,—a cessation which consists in the absence of every passion,—with the abandoning of this thirst, with the doing away with it, with the deliverance from it, with the destruction of desire.

"This is the Noble Truth of the Path which leads to the cessation of suffering: that holy eightfold Path, that is to say,—Right Belief, Right Aspiration, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Means of Livelihood, Right Endeavor, Right Memory, Right Meditation.

"As long, O recluses, as I did not possess with perfect purity this true knowledge and insight into these four Noble Truths, with its three modifications and its twelve constituent parts, so long I knew that I had not yet obtained the highest, absolute Sambodhi in the world of men and gods, in Mara's and Brahma's world, among all beings, Samanas and Brahmanas, gods and men. But since I possessed, with perfect purity, this true knowledge and insight into these four Noble Truths, with its three modifications and its twelve constituent parts, then I knew that I had obtained the highest, universal Sambodhi in the world of men and gods. And this knowledge and insight arose in my mind: 'The emancipation of my mind cannot be lost; this is my last birth; hence I shall not be born again!' "

Thus the Blessed One spoke. The five recluses were delighted, and they rejoiced at the words of the Blessed One. And when this exposition was propounded, the venerable Kondanna obtained the pure and spotless Eye of the Truth (that is to say, the following knowledge): "Whatsoever is subject to the condition of origination, is subject also to the condition of cessation."

And as the Blessed One had founded the Kingdom of Truth by propounding the four Noble Truths, the earth-inhabiting devas shouted: "Truly the Blessed One has found at Benares, in the deer-park of Isipatana, the highest kingdom of Truth, which may be opposed neither by a Samana nor by a Brahmana, neither by a deva, nor by Mara, nor by Brahma, nor by any being in the world."

THE BUDDHA'S PEACE.

HOT steams my food. My cows are milked.
—So said the herdsman Dhaniya—
Along the banks of the Mahi
With equals and with friends I dwell.
Right well is my trim cottage thatched,
And on my hearth the fire burns bright.
So let the rain pour down now, if it likes, to-night!

Cool is my mind. No fallow land lies there.
—So said the Exalted One—
For one night only, as I wander on,
I dwell upon the banks of the Mahi.
My lodging 's open to the sky. The fires
Are out (for in my heart the flames

Of Lust, Ill-will, and Dullness burn no more).
So let the rain pour down now, if it likes, to-night!

There are no gadflies here. My kine
—So said the herdsman Dhaniya—
Are roaming thro' the meadows rich with grass;
Well can they bear the fickle rain-god's blows.
So let the rain pour down now, if it likes, to-night!

My basket raft was woven well together.
—So said the Exalted One—
Crossed over now, I've reached the farther bank
And overcome the floods (the Lust of Sense,
The Lust of Life, Delusion, Ignorance).
So let the rain pour down now, if it likes, to-night!

Obedient is my wife, no wanton she,
—So said the herdsman Dhaniya—
Long has she dwelt with me, my well beloved,
I hear no evil thing in her against me.
So let the rain pour down now, if it likes, to-night!

Obedient is my heart, wholly set free,
—So said the Exalted One—
Long has it been watched over, well subdued,
No evil thing is found within my breast.
So let the rain pour down now, if it likes, to-night!

On my own earnings do I live at ease.
—So said the herdsman Dhaniya—
My boys are all about me, strong in health,
I hear no evil thing in them against me.
So let the rain pour down now, if it likes, to-night!

No man can call me servant, and I wander
—So said the Exalted One—
At will, o'er all the earth, on what I find.
I feel no need of wages, or of gain.
So let the rain pour down now, if it likes, to-night!

I've barren cows and sucking calves,
—So said the herdsman Dhaniya—
And cows in calf, and heifers sleek,
And a strong bull, lord o'er the cows.
So let the rain pour down now, if it likes, to-night!

No barren cows have I, nor sucking calves,
—So said the Exalted One—
No cows in calf, nor heifers sleek,
Nor a strong bull, lord o'er the cows.
So let the rain pour down now, if it likes, to-night!

The stakes are driven in, nothing can shake them,
—So said the herdsman Dhaniya—
The ropes of Munja grass are new and strong,
No calves could break them loose, and stray.
So let the rain pour down now, if it likes, to-night!

I've broken all the bonds loose, like a bull,
—So said the Exalted One—
Or like the lordly elephant, calm in his strength,
Contemning the weak strands of jungle rope.
I ne'er again shall enter the dark womb.
So let the rain pour down now, if it likes, to-night!

Then lo! a thunder-cloud, filling the hollows
And the high ground, that moment poured forth rain,
And Dhaniya the herdsman, as he heard
The god's rain rushing, yielded him, and said:

Oh, great the gain that has accrued to us,
In that we met the Exalted One to-day!
In thee of the seeing eye we put our trust.
Be thou, O mighty Sage, a teacher to us.
My wife and I will be obedient;
Under the Happy One we both will lead
A holy life, and pass beyond old age and death,
And put an end, for aye, to every pain!

BUDDHIST BIRTH-STORIES.

In the sixth century the Persian king Chosroes heard of a Hindu work called the "Pancha Tantra," or "Five Books," and desired to possess a copy. To that end he sent his physician to India. The latter, successfully bribing an Indian sage, returned to Persia with his treasure, and translated it into his native tongue. It became known as "The Lights of Canopus,"—Canopus being the star that with the Persians signified wisdom. The book consists chiefly of fables, or dialogues between animals, who talk and act like men and women. Each chapter forms a story, which is supposed to have been related to a king of India by his philosopher Bidpai.

In the eighth century an Arabic revision was made, called "Kalilah and Dimnah," from the Indian name of two jackals who take a principal part in the book. Three translations were made from the Arabic version by Jews, who were the chief commercial travelers in the Middle Ages. These were into Greek, Hebrew and Latin, and the work was done in the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Two other versions were made direct from the Arabic; and from these five versions came translations into German, Italian, French and English.

The stories of the "Kalilah and Dimnah," or hints from them, are found in the "Gesta Romanorum," which was the monks' play-book of the Middle Ages. They appear also in Boccaccio, Gower, Chaucer and Spenser. The same ideas are in "The Merchant of Venice" and "As You Like It." La Fontaine openly acknowledges his indebtedness to "Les Contes Indiennes de Bidpai" for his "Book of Fables." The "Arabian Nights' Entertainment" is also derived from this source. The tales of Bidpai are thus the source of much of modern literature—both Western and Oriental. But it has also been proved by recent research that these tales are a part of "the oldest, the most complete, and the most important collection of folk-lore extant." This collection is found, strange to say, in the Buddhist Scriptures.

One book of the Buddhist "Pitakas," or Sacred Scriptures, is a collection of old stories, fables and fairy tales, each told to point a moral, and finishing with wise commentaries; the whole intended to convey some great truth. Now, according to the orthodox, the Buddha was reincarnated five hundred and fifty times, and the memories, not of one life, but of all these lives, were always present in his mind. When, therefore, it was necessary for Gautama to explain or comment on anything about him, he would refer to the experiences of his five hundred and fifty lives for the edification of his followers. The stories are homely, shrewd, humorous, sometimes biting in their intended sarcasm; but the wisdom they inculcate is elevated, sweet, sane, and possible of attainment by the struggling disciples. That part of the "Pitakas" which contains all this is called "The Book of the Five Hundred and Fifty Jatakas (or Births)." The stories were gathered in one collection by his disciples after Gautama's death. Some of the Birth-Stories are found in the collection called the "Hitopadesa," or "Book of Good Counsel," which is part of the more ancient book called the "Pancha Tantra."

Recent research carries us further still. Æsop is familiarly known as a writer of stories and fables, and is supposed to have flourished in the sixth century B.C. He is quoted thus by Plato, Aristophanes, Aristotle, and Lucian. But the Greek fables which are now called Æsop's are really not Æsopian; that collection was formed by Planudes, a learned monk of Constantinople, in the early part of the fifteenth century. He borrowed the name of the old fabulist and called his work "Æsop's Fables." Two supplementary collections subsequently appeared. From these, and especially from the work of Planudes, all our so-called "Æsop's Fables" are derived. Many of these are traced back to the Buddhist Jataka book, and almost the whole are probably derived from Indian sources; thus the children of the East and the children of the West, and older folk, have alike been instructed and amused by practically the same stories found in the "Pancha Tantra," "The Lights of Canopus," "The Kalilah and Dimnah," "The Bidpai Tales," "Æsop's Fables," and the "Buddhist Birth Stories," "The Five Hundred and Fifty Jatakas of the Three Pitakas."

THE JUDGMENT OF BUDDHA.

THIS story which resembles the Biblical story of the Judgment of Solomon is of later date, but was probably not derived from it.

A woman, carrying her child, went to the future Buddha's tank to wash. And having first bathed the child, she put on her upper garment and descended into the water to bathe herself. Then a Yakshini [a cannibal witch], seeing the child, had a craving to eat it. And taking the form of a woman, she drew near, and asked the mother—"Friend, this is a very pretty child; is it one of yours?" And when she was told it was, she asked if she might nurse it. And this being allowed, she nursed it a little and then carried it off. But when the mother saw this, she ran after her, and cried out, "Where are you taking my child to?" and caught hold of her.

The Yakshini boldly said, "Where did you get the child from? It is mine!" And so quarreling, they passed the door of the future Buddha's Judgment Hall. He heard the noise, sent for them, inquired into the matter, and asked them whether they would abide by his decision. And they agreed. Then he had a line drawn on the ground; and told the Yakshini to take hold of the child's arms, and the mother to take hold of its legs; and said, "The child shall be hers who drags him over the line." But as soon as they pulled at him, the mother, seeing how he suffered, grieved as if her heart would break; and letting him go, she stood there weeping.

Then the future Buddha asked the bystanders, "Whose hearts are tender to babes? those who have borne children, or those who have not?" And they answered, "O Sire! the hearts of mothers are tender." Then he said, "Who, think you, is the mother? she who has the child in her arms, or she who has let go?" And they answered, "She who has let go is the mother."

And he said, "Then do you all think that the other was the thief?" And they answered, "Sire! we cannot tell." And he said, "Verily this is a Yakshini, who took the child to eat it." And they asked, "O Sire! how did you know it?" And he replied, "Because her eyes winked not, and were red, and she knew no fear, and had no pity, I knew it." And so saying, he demanded of the thief, "Who are you?" And she said, "Lord! I am a Yakshini." And he asked, "Why did you take away this child?" And she said, "I thought to eat him, O my Lord!"

And he rebuked her, saying, "O foolish woman! For your former sins you have been born a Yakshini, and now do you still sin?" And he laid a vow upon her to keep the Five Commandments, and let her go. But the mother of the child exalted the future Buddha, and said, "O my Lord! O Great Physician! may thy life be long!" And she went away, with her babe clasped to her bosom.

SAKKA'S PRESENTS.

THIS incongruous story is the most ancient Indian tale in which inanimate objects are endowed with magical properties. For still more ancient Egyptian tales of magic, see Volume I., p. 33.

Once upon a time, when Brahma-datta was reigning in Benares, four brothers, Brahmans, of that kingdom, devoted themselves to an ascetic life; and having built themselves huts at equal distances in the region of the Himalaya mountains, took up their residence there.

The eldest of them died, and was re-born as the god Sakka. When he became aware of this, he used to go and render help at intervals of seven or eight days to the others. And one day, having greeted the eldest hermit, and sat down beside him, he asked him, "Reverend Sir, what are you in need of?"

The hermit, who suffered from jaundice, answered, "I want fire!" So he gave him a double-edged hatchet. But the hermit said, "Who is to take this and bring me firewood?" Then Sakka spake thus to him, "Whenever, reverend Sir, you want firewood, you should let go the hatchet from your hand, and say, 'Please fetch me firewood: make me fire!' And it will do so."

So he gave him the hatchet; and went to the second hermit and asked, "Reverend Sir, what are you in need of?" Now the elephants had made a track for themselves close to his hut. And he was annoyed by those elephants, and said, "I am much troubled by elephants; drive them away." Sakka, handing him a drum, said, "Reverend Sir, if you strike on this side of it, your enemies will take to flight; but if you strike on the other side, they will become friendly, and surround you on all sides with an army in fourfold array, infantry, cavalry, chariots and elephants."

So he gave him the drum; and went to the third hermit, and asked, "Reverend Sir, what are you in need of?" He was also affected with jaundice, and said, therefore, "I want sour milk." Sakka gave him a milk-bowl, and said, "If you wish for anything, and turn this bowl over, it will become a great river, and pour out such a torrent, that it will be able to take a kingdom and give it to you."

And Sakka went away. But thenceforward the hatchet made fire for the eldest hermit; when the second struck one side of his drum, the elephants ran away; and the third enjoyed his curds.

Now at that time a wild boar, straying in a forsaken village, saw a gem of magical power. When he seized this in his mouth, he rose by its magic into the air, and went to an island in the midst of the ocean. Then thinking, "Here now I ought to live," he descended, and took up his abode in a convenient spot under an Udumbara-tree. And one day, placing the gem before him, he fell asleep at the foot of the tree.

Now a certain man of the land of Kasi had been expelled from home by his parents, who said, "This fellow is of no use to us." So he went to a seaport, and embarked in a ship as a servant to the sailors. And the ship was wrecked; but by the help of a plank he reached that very island. And while he was looking about for fruits, he saw the boar asleep; and going softly up, he took hold of the gem.

Then by its magical power he straightway rose right up into the air! So, taking a seat on the Udumbara-tree, he said to himself, "Methinks this boar must have become a sky-walker through the magic power of this gem. That's how he came to be living here! It's plain enough what I ought to do; first of all I'll kill and eat him, and then I can get away!"

So he broke a twig off the tree and dropped it on his head. The boar woke up, and not seeing the gem, ran about, trembling, this way and that way. The man seated on the tree laughed. The boar, looking up, saw him, and dashing his head against the tree, died on the spot. But the man descended, cooked his flesh, ate it and rose into the air.

As he passed along the summit of the Himalaya range, he saw a hermitage; and descending at the hut of the eldest hermit, he stayed there two or three days and waited on the hermit; and thus became aware of the magic power of the hatchet.

"I must get that," thought he. And he showed the hermit the magic power of his gem, and said, "Sir, do you take this and give me your hatchet." The ascetic, full of longing to be able to fly through the air,* did so. But the man, taking the hatchet, went a little way off and letting it go, said, "O hatchet! cut off that hermit's head and bring the gem to me!" And it went, and cut off the hermit's head and brought him the gem.

Then he put the hatchet in a secret place, and went to the second hermit, and stayed there a few days. And having thus become aware of the magic power of the drum, he exchanged the gem for the drum; and cut off this hermit's head too in the same way as before.

Then he went to the third hermit, and saw the magic power of the milk-bowl; and exchanging the gem for it, caused his head to be cut off in the same manner. And taking the Gem, and the Hatchet, and the Drum, and the Milk-bowl, he flew away up into the air.

Not far from the city of Benares he stopped, and sent by the hand of a man a letter to the king of Benares to this effect, "Either do battle, or give me up your kingdom!" No sooner had the king heard that message, than he sallied forth, saying, "Let us catch the scoundrel!"

But the man beat one side of his drum, and a fourfold army stood around him! And directly he saw that the king's army was drawn out in battle array, he poured out his milk-bowl; and a mighty river arose, and the multitude, sinking down in it, were not able to escape! Then letting go the hatchet, he said, "Bring me the king's head!" And the hatchet went, and brought the king's head, and threw it at his feet; and no one had time even to raise a weapon!

Then he entered the city in the midst of his great army, and caused himself to be anointed king, under the name of Dadhi-vahana (The Lord of Milk), and governed the kingdom with righteousness.

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* It is a common belief in India that by extreme asceticism one may attain the power of passing to a distance through the air.

THE CRANE AND THE CRAB.

LONG ago the Bodisat [Buddha] was born to a forest life as the Genius of a tree standing near a certain lotus pond. Now at that time the water used to run short at the dry season in a certain pond, not over large, in which there were a good many fish. And a crane thought, on seeing the fish—"I must outwit these fish somehow or other and make a prey of them." And he went and sat down at the edge of the water, thinking how he should do it.

When the fish saw him, they asked him, "What are you sitting there for, lost in thought?"

"I am sitting thinking about you," said he.

"O sir! what are you thinking about us?" said they.

"Why," he replied; "there is very little water in this pond, and but little for you to eat; and the heat is so great! So I was thinking, 'What in the world will these fish do now?'"

"Yes, indeed, sir! what are we to do?" said they.

"If you will only do as I bid you, I will take you in my beak to a fine large pond, covered with all kinds of lotuses, and put you into it," answered the crane.

"That a crane should take thought for the fishes is a thing unheard of, sir, since the world began. It's eating us, one after the other, that you're aiming at!"

"Not I! So long as you trust me, I won't eat you. But if you don't believe me that there is such a pond, send one of you with me to go and see it."

Then they trusted him, and handed over to him one of their number—a big fellow, blind of one eye, whom they thought sharp enough in any emergency, afloat or ashore. Him the crane took with him, let him go in the pond, showed him the whole of it, brought him back and let him go again close to the other fish. And he told them all the glories of the pond. And when they heard what he said, they exclaimed, "All right, sir! You may take us with you."

Then the crane took the old purblind fish first to the bank of the other pond, and alighted in a Varana-tree growing on the bank there. But he threw it into a fork of the tree, struck it with his beak and killed it; and then ate its flesh, and threw its bones away at the foot of the tree. Then he went back and called out—

"I've thrown that fish in; let another come!"

And in that manner he took all the fish, one by one, and ate them, till he came back and found no more!

But there was still a crab left behind there; and the crane thought he would eat him too, and called out—

"I say, good crab, I've taken all the fish away, and put them into a fine large pond. Come along. I'll take you too!"

"But how will you take hold of me to carry me along?"

"I'll bite hold of you with my beak."

"You'll let me fall if you carry me like that. I won't go with you!"

"Don't be afraid! I'll hold you quite tight all the way."

Then said the crab to himself, "If this fellow once got hold of fish, he would never let them go in a pond! Now if he should really put me into the pond, it would be capital; but if he doesn't—then I'll cut his throat and kill him!" So he said to him—

"Look here, friend, you won't be able to hold me tight enough; but we crabs have a famous grip. If you let me catch hold of you round the neck with my claws, I shall be glad to go with you."

And the other did not see that he was trying to outwit him and agreed. So the crab caught hold of his neck with his claws as securely as with a pair of blacksmith's pincers, and called out, "Off with you, now!"

And the crane took him and showed him the pond, and then turned off towards the Varana-tree.

"Uncle!" cried the crab, "the pond lies that way, but you are taking me this way!"

"Oh, that's it, is it?" answered the crane. "Your dear little uncle, you very sweet nephew, you call me! You mean me to understand, I suppose, that I am your slave, who has to lift you up and carry you about with him! Now cast your eye upon the heap of fish-bones lying at the root of yonder Varana-tree. Just as I have eaten those fish, every one of them, so I will devour you as well!"

"Ah! those fishes got eaten through their own stupidity," answered the crab; "but I'm not going to let you eat *me*. On the contrary, it is *you* that I am going to destroy. For you in your folly have not seen that I was outwitting you. If we die, we die both together; for I will cut off this head of yours, and cast it to the ground!" And so saying, he gave the crane's neck a grip with his claws, as with a vice.

Then gasping, and with tears trickling from his eyes, and trembling with the fear of death, the crane besought him, saying, "O my Lord! Indeed I did not intend to eat you. Grant me my life!"

"Well, well! step down into the pond and put me in there."

And he turned round and stepped down into the pond, and placed the crab on the mud at its edge. But the crab cut through his neck as clean as one would cut a lotus-stalk with a hunting-knife, and then only entered the water!

When the Genius who lived in the Varana-tree saw this strange affair, he made the wood resound with his plaudits, uttering in a pleasant voice the verse—

"The villain, though exceeding clever,
Shall not prosper by his villany.
He may win indeed, sharp-witted in deceit,
But only as the Crane here from the Crab!"

THE BOOK OF GOOD COUNSEL.

THE Hitopadesa, or Book of Good Counsel, is the later Sanskrit version of the Jatakas, or Buddhist Birth-Stories. The constant references to the Buddha are omitted, and the book appears as a manual of instruction for princes. The sage Vishnu-Sarnam tells the sons of King Sadarsana tales and fables, interspersed with moral verses, to impress on them the proper rules of conduct and governing. The four grand divisions treat of the Winning of Friends, the Parting of Friends, War and Peace. The verses are thought to be older than the stories illustrating them, but of this there is no certainty.

THE VULTURE AND THE CAT.

ON the banks of the Ganges there is a cliff called Vulture-Crag, and thereupon grew a great fig-tree. It was hollow, and within its shelter lived an old Vulture named Grey-pate, whose hard fortune it was to have lost both eyes and talons. The birds that roosted in the tree made contributions from their own store, out of sheer pity for the poor fellow, and by that means he managed to live. One day, when the old birds were gone, Long-ear, the Cat, came there to get a meal of the nestlings; and they, alarmed at perceiving him, set up a chirruping that roused Grey-pate.

"Who comes there?" croaked Grey-pate.

Now Long-ear, on espying the Vulture, thought himself undone; but as flight was impossible, he resolved to trust his destiny and approach.

"My lord," said he, "I have the honor to salute thee."

"Who is it?" said the Vulture.

"I am a Cat."

"Be off, Cat, or I shall slay thee," said the Vulture.

"I am ready to die if I deserve death," answered the Cat; "but let what I have to say be heard."

"Wherefore, then, comest thou?" said the Vulture.

"I live," began Long-ear, "on the Ganges, bathing, and eating no flesh, practising the moon-penance. The birds that resort thither constantly praise your worship to me as one wholly given to the study of morality, and worthy of all trust; and so I came here to learn law from thee, Sir, who art so deep gone in learning and in years. Dost thou, then, so read the law of strangers as to be ready to slay a guest? What say the books about the householder?—

'Bar thy door not to the stranger, be he friend or be he foe,
For the tree will shade the woodman while his axe doth lay it
low.'

And if means fail, what there is should be given with kind words; as—

'Greeting fair, and room to rest in; fire, and water from the well—
Simple gifts—are given freely in the house where good men dwell,'—

And without respect of person—

'Young, or bent with many winters; rich, or poor, whate'er thy guest,
Honor him for thine own honor—better is he than the best.'

Else comes the rebuke—

'Pity them that ask thy pity: who art thou to stint thy hoard,
When the holy moon shines equal on the leper and the lord?'

And that other, too,—

'When thy gate is roughly fastened, and the asker turns away,
Thence he bears thy good deeds with him, and his sins on thee doth lay.'

For verily,—

'In the house the husband ruleth, men the Brahmans "master" call;
Agni is the Twice-born Master—but the guest is lord of all.'"

To these weighty words Grey-pate answered:

"Yes! but cats like meat, and there are young birds here, and therefore I said, go."

"Sir," said the Cat (and as he spoke he touched the ground, and then his two ears, and called on Krishna to witness to his words), "I that have overcome passion, and practised the moon-penance, know the Scriptures; and howsoever they contend, in this primal duty of abstaining from injury they are unanimous. Which of them sayeth not,—

'He who does and thinks no wrong—
He who suffers, being strong—
He whose harmlessness men know—
Unto Swerga such doth go.'"

And so, winning the old Vulture's confidence, Long-ear, the Cat, entered the hollow tree and lived there. And day after day he stole away some of the nestlings, and brought them down to the hollow to devour. Meantime the parent birds, whose little ones were being eaten, made search after them in all quarters; and the Cat, discovering this fact, slipped out from the hollow and made his escape. Afterwards, when the birds came to look closely, they found the bones of their young ones in the hollow of the tree where Grey-pate lived; and the birds at once concluded that their nestlings had been killed and eaten by the old Vulture, whom they accordingly executed.

THE OLD JACKAL AND THE ELEPHANT.

IN the forest of Brahma lived an Elephant whose name was White-front. The Jackals knew him, and said among themselves, "If this great brute would but die, there would be four months' food for us, and plenty, out of his carcass." With that an old Jackal stood up and pledged himself to compass the death of the Elephant by his own wit. Accordingly he sought for White-front, and, going up to him, he made the reverential prostration of the eight members, gravely saluting him.

"Divine creature," said he, "vouchsafe me the regard of one look."

"Who art thou?" grunted the Elephant, "and whence comest thou?"

"I am only a Jackal," said the other; "but the beasts of the forest are convinced that it is not expedient to live without a king, and they have met in full council and despatched me to acquaint your Royal Highness that on you, endowed with so many lordly qualities, their choice has fallen for a sovereign over the forest here. Let your Majesty, therefore, repair thither at once, that the moment of fortunate conjunction may not escape us." So saying he led the way, followed at a great pace by White-front, who was eager to commence his reign.

Presently the Jackal brought him upon a deep slough, into which he plunged heavily before he could stop himself.

"Good master Jackal," cried the Elephant, "what's to do now? I am up to my belly in this quagmire."

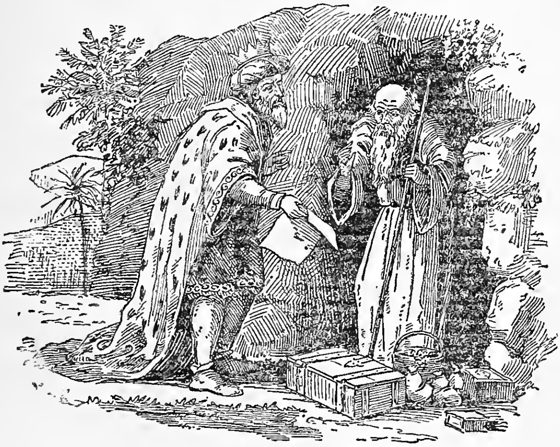
"Perhaps your Majesty," said the Jackal, with an impudent laugh, "will condescend to take hold of the tip of my tail with your trunk, and so get out."

Then White-front, the Elephant, knew that he had been deceived; and thus he sank in the slime and was devoured by the Jackals.

THE FABLES OF BIDPAI.

The following fables are taken from the Arabic version, called in the original "Kalilah and Dimnah," from the two Jackals who are subjects of the Lion, but more commonly known as "The Fables of Bidpai," or Pilpay, according to the French. The stories are still closely connected and interwoven with each other, being told by the various actors, whether men or beasts, in illustration or defence of their actions.

The King and His Two Sons.



In the country of Ardos there lived an ancient King who had two sons, both covetous, yet given to debauchery. This monarch, finding the infirmities of age increase upon him, and that he was hasting to the other world, and considering the character of his two sons, was afraid that after his death they would dissipate in idle expenses the vast treasure which he had heaped together, and therefore resolved to hide it. With this design he went to a religious Hermit who had retired from the world, and in whom he had a very great confidence. By the counsel of this Hermit, the treasure was buried in the earth near where the Hermit dwelt, so privately that nobody knew anything of it. This done, the King made his will, which he put into the Hermit's hands with these farther orders: "I charge you," said he, "only to reveal this treasure to my children, when after my death you see them in the distresses of poverty. It may be," added the King, "that when they have suffered a little hardship they will become more prudent in their conduct."

The Hermit having promised all fidelity in the observance of the King's commands, the monarch returned to his palace and in a short time after died; nor did the Hermit long survive him: the treasure therefore lay concealed, probably forever to continue so, in the hermitage. The King being now dead, the sons could not agree about the succession. This occasioned a bloody war between them; and the elder, who was the more powerful, utterly despoiled his younger brother of all that he had. This young Prince, thus deprived of his inheritance, fell into a deep melancholy and resolved to quit the world. To that purpose he left the city, and calling to mind the kindness between his father and the Hermit, said to himself, "There is no other way for me but to find out this honest man, that I may learn of him to live as he does, and end my life in peace and contentedness in his company." With this resolution he left the city, but coming to the hermitage, found that the Hermit was dead. He was greatly afflicted and disappointed at this unexpected chance, but still resolved to live as he had done, and accordingly made choice of his retirement for his habitation.

There was in this hermitage a well, which had been used to supply the place with water, but it was now dry; to search into the cause of this the unhappy Prince ventured to let himself down to the bottom of the well: but how great was his astonishment when he saw the lower part of it for a great depth filled with his father's treasures. On finding this he was thankful to Heaven, and wisely resolved to lay out his money with more moderation than he had done before.

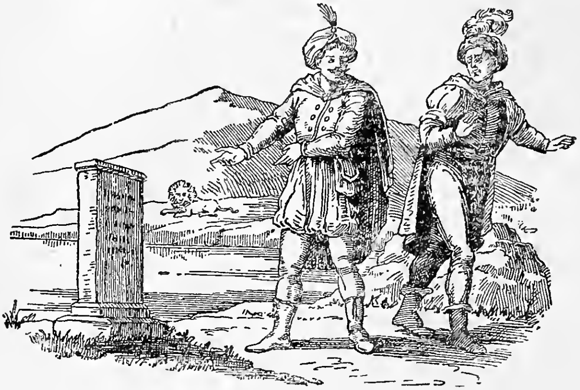
On the other hand, his brother sat securely reveling upon his throne, without any care of his people or his army, imagining with himself that his father's treasure was hid in the palace, as he had told him upon his death-bed. One day, being at war with a neighboring Prince, he was obliged to have recourse to his expected treasure. But how was he amazed after he had sought a long time and found nothing! This quite disabled him from raising a powerful army, and threw him into a fit of melancholy. However, making a virtue of necessity, he raised what force he could and marched out of the city to meet and encounter his enemy. The battle was obstinate, and this King and his enemy were both slain; so that the two armies, enraged at the loss of their leaders, fell to butchering each other with equal fury, till at length the generals, having agreed together that it would be their better way to choose a mild and gentle King for the government of the state, went and found out the young Prince, who had retired to the hermitage, conducted him in great pomp to the royal palace, and set him upon the throne.

The Two Travelers.

There were once two Friends who made a resolution never to leave each other, and, in pursuance of this, always traveled together. But one day, as they were journeying, they came to a deep river at the foot of a hill, and the place was so delightful that they resolved to rest themselves by the stream. After they were well refreshed, they began to look about them, and saw a white stone that contained the following words, written in blue letters:

"Travelers, we have prepared an excellent banquet for your welcome; but you must be bold and deserve it before you can obtain it. What you are to do is this: throw yourself boldly into this fountain and swim to the other side; you shall there meet with a lion carved in white stone; this you must take upon your shoulders, and, without stopping, run with it to the top of yonder mountain, never fearing the wild beasts that surround you, nor the thorns that prick your feet, for be assured nothing will hurt you; and as soon as you get to the top of the hill, you will immediately find yourselves in possession of great felicity; but if you cease going forward, you shall never come to the happiness: nor shall the slothful ever attain to what is here prepared for the industrious."

Then Ganem (for that was the name of one of the two companions) said to Salem (for so was the other called), "Brother, here is a means prescribed us, that will put an end to all our pains and toil; let us take courage, and try whether what this stone contains be true or false."



"Dear brother," replied Salem, "it is not for a man of sense to give credit to such an idle writing as this appears to me to be, and in a vain expectation of I know not what uncertain gain, to throw himself into evident danger."

"Friend," replied Ganem, "they who have courage contemn danger to make themselves happy; there is no gathering the rose without being pricked by the thorns."

"Be that as it will," answered Salem, "if we are in our senses, we must see that it is not our business, for the sake of a dark promise, to throw ourselves into this water. A rational man, brother, never moves one of his feet till the other be fixed. For my part I will not share with you in dangers of this kind, but shall endeavor to dissuade you from such idle undertakings."

"No persuasions," replied Ganem, "shall make me alter my resolution; and, therefore, if you will not follow me, dear friend, at least be pleased to see me venture."

Salem, seeing him still resolute, cried out, "Dearest brother, if you are weak enough in your reason, to determine on this rash undertaking, give me a last embrace, and farewell forever; you have refused my admonitions, and I have not the power to stay and be a witness of your ruin." On this they took a parting embrace and Salem set forward upon his journey.

On the other hand, Ganem went to the brink of the river, resolved to perish or to win the prize. He found it deep, but, strengthened by his courage, he threw himself in and swam to the other side. When he had recovered the dry land, he rested himself a while; and then lifting up the lion, ran with it, without stopping, to the top of the mountain. He saw a very fair and glorious city, and, as he was attentively viewing it, there issued from the lion of stone such a terrible, thundering noise, that the mountain and all the places round about it trembled. This noise no sooner reached the ears of the inhabitants of the city, but they came running up to Ganem; some that seemed to be superior to the rest in quality and degree, accosted him with great respect and ceremony; and, after they had addressed him with many praises, they set him upon a horse sumptuously caparisoned, conducted him to the city, where they made him put on the royal robes, and proclaimed him King of all their country. When this ceremony was over, the new monarch desired to understand the reason of his advancement, to which they answered: "That the learned men of the kingdom had, by virtue of a talisman, so charmed the river which he had crossed, and the lion of stone which he had carried to the top of the mountain, that whenever their King died, any one who was so adventurous as to expose himself to the hazards he had done, and brought the lion safe to the top of the mountain, had this reward for his courage; that the lion roared out so prodigously, that the inhabitants, hearing the noise, went forth in search of the person who had arrived with it, to make him their King. This custom," pursued they, "has been of long continuance, and was meant to insure us for our King, a man of courage and resolution; and since the lot has fallen upon your majesty, your sovereignty is absolute among us."

BRAHMAN PHILOSOPHY.

Around the Vedas, the fundamental sacred books of the Hindus,* there grew up in the course of centuries an immense literature, both religious and philosophical. The former kind comprises the "Brahmanas," priestly maxims, the "Puranas," collections of traditions, explanatory of the Vedas, and the "Upapuranas," or later commentaries on these very Puranas. All of these works in turn acquired a sacred character, and as they sometimes varied in doctrine they gave rise to corresponding sects, which attached special importance to particular views. The simple nature-worship of the original Vedas was thus superseded, and a system introduced, which on one side appears more spiritual, while on others it favored a gross idolatry. The first change was to explain the various deities addressed in the early hymns to be merely different names or manifestations of the one Supreme Being—Brahma. Another was to exalt the Brahman priesthood as having a specially close connection with this Almighty Lord. To this end the hierarchy of caste was introduced, and the rules governing this system became more rigid as the power of the priests increased. They had originally been the counsellors of the princes or warrior caste, but they eventually usurped the highest place as a privileged class. Still more famous as a distinguishing feature of the Hindu belief is the doctrine of metempsychosis, or the transmigration of souls. Early Greek writers frequently refer to this view as prevailing in India, and Pythagoras, whose name is inseparably connected with the doctrine, is declared to have learned it in the East. It is still part and parcel of the Hindu mind. The Laws of Manu are a comparatively modernized version of the wonderful code which has governed the lives of the Hindus from the establishment of Brahmanical supremacy. The laws attracted the attention of the early students of Sanskrit, who accepted many statements about their origin, which have since been disproved by closer investigation of the older literature.

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* See Volume I., pp. 79-81.

The philosophical speculations of the Brahmans are found chiefly in the "Upanishads," which are probably of equal antiquity with the Brahmanas. According to these remarkable treatises, nothing really exists except Brahman, the universal spirit. The various deities of the Veda, the souls of men, and the manifold forms of life are permitted to have an apparently separate existence. But the whole universe is a vain and fleeting show. The true end and aim of the separate spirits is to attain reunion with the Eternal Being. This end can be accomplished by the complete suppression of desire, for desire, being directed towards other finite things, hinders the innate tendency of the spirit to return to its source. One who has perfectly mastered the knowledge of this limiting nature of desire will withdraw from the distracting cares of the world and, ceasing to act, will engage in contemplation. He knows the world to be not merely transitory, but illusive. The one who has suppressed desire will be released from the endless chain of finite existence, and will attain to absorption in the Brahman. This sublime Pantheism was practically confined to the higher grades of the priesthood. As it has gradually been unfolded in this century by students, it has found many admirers in the West.

The Buddha rejected the system of caste and opened to all classes the privileges of the higher life, formerly confined to the select few. Though this was accompanied by the loss of all worldly distinction, it is readily seen that it would furnish irresistible attraction to the spiritually minded. In this seems to lie the explanation of the wide diffusion of Buddhism. On the other hand, the Brahmans, jealous of their secular privileges, and imbued with spiritual pride, became hostile to the self-denying Buddhists, and eventually drove them from the Holy Land, in which their Founder had lived and taught.

Of the two extracts following, the first, from the Puranas, illustrates the prolific growth of mythology, the second, from the Upanishads, the development of pantheistic philosophy.

THE CHURNING OF THE OCEAN.

AMONG the Brahman beliefs rejected by the Buddhists, one is that extreme asceticism confers on men supernatural power. Thus in the Purana, one of the later sacred books, it is told that the sage Durvasas, by his prolonged ascetic practices, had obtained supernatural power even over the gods, and had made them subject to demons. In their distress they applied to Vishnu for relief, who directed them how to obtain the Amrita (or ambrosia), the immortal food, by churning the ocean. The following translation is by Sir Monier Williams.

The gods addressed the mighty Vishnu thus—
"Conquered in battle by the evil demons,
We fly to thee for succor, Soul of all,
Pity and by thy might deliver us."
Hari the lord, creator of the world,
Thus by the gods implored, all graciously
Replied—"Your strength shall be restored, ye gods;
Only accomplish what I now command;
Unite yourselves in peaceful combination
With these your foes; collect all plants and herbs
Of diverse kind from every quarter, cast them
Into the sea of milk; take Mandara,
The mountain, for a churning-stick, and Vasuki,
The serpent, for a rope; together churn
The ocean to produce the beverage—
Source of all strength and immortality.—
Then reckon on my aid, I will take care
Your foes shall share your toil, but not partake
In its reward or drink th' immortal draught."
Thus by the god of gods advised, the host
United in alliance with the demons.
Straightway they gathered various herbs and cast them
Into the waters, then they took the mountain
To serve as churning-staff, and next the snake
To serve as cord, and in the ocean's midst
Hari himself, present in tortoise-form,
Became a pivot for the churning-staff.
Then did they churn the sea of milk; and first
Out of the waters rose the sacred Cow,
God-worshipped Surabhi—eternal fountain
Of milk and offerings of butter; next,

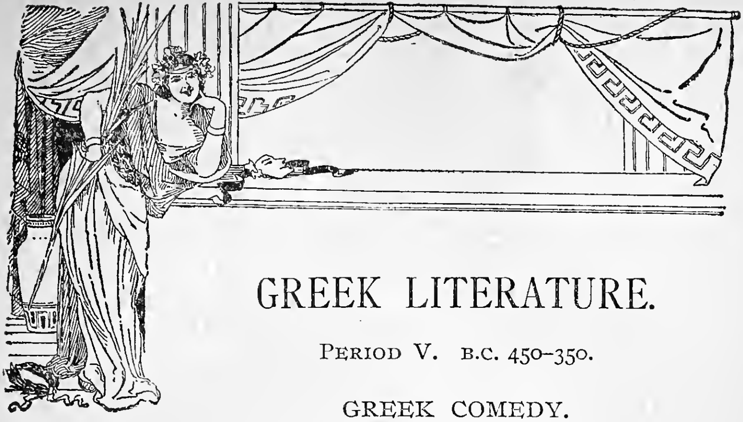
While holy Siddhas wondered at the sight,
With eyes all rolling, Varuni uprose—
Goddess of wine. Then from the whirlpool sprang
Fair Parijata, tree of Paradise, delight
Of heavenly maidens, with its fragrant blossoms
Perfuming the whole world. Th' Apsarasas,
Troop of celestial nymphs, matchless in grace,
Perfect in loveliness, were next produced.
Then from the sea uprose the cool-rayed moon,
Which Maha-deva seized; terrific poison
Next issued from the waters; this the snake-gods
Claimed as their own. Then seated on a lotus
Beauty's bright goddess, peerless Sri, arose
Out of the waves, and with her, robed in white,
Came forth Dhanvantari, the gods' physician.
High in his hand he bore the cup of nectar—
Life-giving draught—longed for by gods and demons.
Then had the demons forcibly borne off
The cup, and drained the precious beverage,
Had not the mighty Vishnu interposed.
Bewildering them, he gave it to the gods;
Whereat incensed, the demon troops assailed
The host of heaven, but they with strength renewed
Quaffing the draught, struck down their foes, who fell
Headlong through space to lowest depths of hell.

THE MYSTERY OF EXISTENCE.

THE following extract from "The Upanishads" exhibits the Brahman philosophy which the Buddhists rejected. Vajashravasa, the father of Nachiketas, sacrificed all his possessions to obtain favor of the gods. He even devoted his son to Death, and the son, full of faith, went to the house of Death, who granted him three wishes. He asks first for the favor of the gods, secondly for the heavenly fire, and lastly, the end of existence, what is in the great Beyond. Death grants him the first two, but requests him to choose another than the last; but when Nachiketas insists, answers him as follows.

The good, the pleasant, these are separate ends,
The one or other all mankind pursue;
But those who seek the good, alone are blest;
Who choose the pleasant miss man's highest aim;
The sage the truth discerns, not so the fool.

But thou, my son, with wisdom hast abandoned
The fatal road of wealth which leads to death.
Two other roads there are all wide apart,
Ending in widely different goals—the one
Called ignorance, the other knowledge—this,
O Nachiketas, thou dost well to choose.
The foolish follow ignorance, but think
They tread the road of wisdom, circling round
With erring steps, like blind men led by blind.
The careless youth, by lust of gain deceived,
Knows but one world, one life; to him the Now
Alone exists, the Future is a dream.
The highest aim of knowledge is the soul;
This is a miracle, beyond the ken
Of common mortals, thought of though it be,
And variously explained by skillful teachers.
Who gains this knowledge is a marvel too.
He lives above the cares—the griefs and joys
Of time and sense—seeking to penetrate
The fathomless unborn eternal essence.
The slayer thinks he slays, the slain
Believes himself destroyed; the thoughts of both
Are false, the soul survives, nor kills, nor dies;
'Tis subtler than the subtlest, greater than
The greatest, infinitely small, yet vast,
Asleep, yet restless, moving everywhere
Among the bodies—ever bodiless—
Think not to grasp it by the reasoning mind;
The wicked ne'er can know it; soul alone
Knows soul, to none but soul is soul revealed.



GREEK LITERATURE.

PERIOD V. B.C. 450–350.

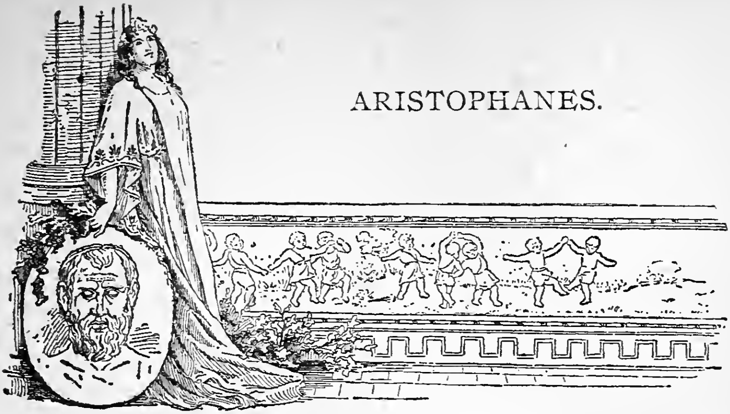
GREEK COMEDY.

GREEK comedy, like tragedy, had its origin in the annual festivals of Dionysius, but the establishment of tragedy preceded that of comedy by about half a century. Of comedy there are three well-marked periods which correspond very accurately with three distinct phases of national life at Athens. The first period begins about 450 B.C.; in its political aspect, it extends from the supremacy of the democracy to the humbling of Athens by the Spartans. The second period, commencing 404 B.C., saw Athens reduced to the condition of a second-rate power, yet still free and influential. Her intellectual activity was diverted from problems of national policy, and directed to questions of literature and philosophy. The year 338 B.C. marks the beginning of the third period, which runs on to about 260 B.C. At this stage Athens was still wealthy and populous, but no longer free and powerful; yet as an offset, she had become the seat of learning and the resort of cultivated men of all nations. Fervor and enthusiasm had cooled down and given way to a life of refined amusement combined with luxury, and an Epicurean mode of life. When Rome encroached on Hellas, this Greek culture took root in Italian soil.

Greek comedy passed through three changes corresponding to these mutations of Athenian national life. They are distinguished as the Old, the Middle, and the New Comedy. The Old Comedy, originating in Megarian farces and phallic processions, freely exercised its powers of ridicule on all the affairs of the State. Individual and public transactions were boldly caricatured and criticised. The wantonness of this license has amazed modern students. But the vigorous Athenians considered themselves secure and could afford to laugh at a travesty of their own imperfections. By-and-by laws were passed restricting the freedom of the stage, and prohibiting State officers from exhibiting comic dramas. Such laws were passed, abrogated and repassed, between the years 440 and 404 B.C. The Old Comedy was mainly political.

After the close of the Peloponnesian war the Athenian nation experienced a change which fitted it for the second or literary stage of comedy. Hitherto the wit of the comic drama had been aimed at public, rather than private characters. Now philosophers, poets, parasites and courtesans received the shafts formerly shot at political celebrities. The plot and story of the drama began to be developed, the office of the chorus was restricted, and the allegory fell into disuse, This transition period in which the Old Comedy passes into the Middle, is marked by the "Frogs" of Aristophanes, in which, in a general way, literature takes the place of politics.

The New Comedy, which corresponds with the third aspect of Athenian life, is represented by brief fragments of Menander, Philemon, and others of less account. In their plays the chorus was dropped altogether, and a form of art introduced corresponding to the representations of character and manners on the modern stage. Love adventures form the centre of the plot, and the energies of the poet are directed to accurate delineations of domestic life. The severe parent, the spendthrift son, and the roguish servants become types of character as fixed and invariable as the stage properties. Thus Athenian Comedy, which in its oldest form exhibited the unmixed ingredients of fun and farce, in its latest form shows a resemblance to the last of the great Greek tragedies, and in the machinery of its plot and incidents approximates to the modern drama. This was the comedy which was appropriated and imitated in Latin by Plautus and Terence, and is now understood chiefly from their masterpieces.



ARISTOPHANES.

Aristophanes was the greatest comic poet of antiquity. He was born at Athens about B.C. 444. His literary career falls into three divisions which correspond to certain changes of social and political life at Athens. Comedy rose and fell with democratic domination. As popular freedom declined, the *parabasis*, which corresponds somewhat to the topical song of the present time, was deprived of the unrestrained freedom it had hitherto enjoyed. After the disastrous Sicilian expedition of 413 B.C., the resources of the State were so diminished that dramatic entertainments could not be so liberally patronized as before. Of fifty-four comedies ascribed to Aristophanes only eleven are extant, and these naturally group themselves according to the three periods which have been mentioned. Six plays belong to the first period, which extends to the Sicilian expedition. The next period is represented by three plays, in which the chorus has ceased to be of importance. The third period, which followed the humbling of Athens, yields only two comedies, in which the choral element is all but eliminated, and the genius of the poet is shown at its weakest. The plots begin now to be drawn from an ideal world, and not from scenes of actual Athenian life.

In most of these plays Aristophanes treats of a great variety of subjects of local interest. He was strongly conservative in his ideas and could not understand the march of progressive thought. Consequently he was bitterly opposed to the new ideas of education, and keenly satirized Socrates as the arch-heretic. He hated the insolence of mob rule, was a devout worshipper of the gods, and the avowed enemy of everything ignoble and pretentious. The Athens of Marathon and Salamis, with all her traditional glories, was his ideal. His intense likes and dislikes enabled him to act as the censor of the city. He was not alone in his antipathy to democratic rule. Many among the educated classes did not conceal the disgust with which the wild extravagance of the people had inspired them. They were gratified with his unsparing ridicule of the fickle mob and the fawning demagogues.

Aristophanes was not merely a wit and a satirist, but had the qualities of a great poet. But the lofty flights of his genius are only incidental. The main points of his art do not lie in brilliant pictures of character, or scenes of every-day life and well-constructed plots, but rather in those fantastic travesties and unrestricted flights of fancy which convert his comedies into gigantic farces in which the world is turned upside down, and which thus create irrepressible laughter. In Shakespeare alone do we find anything to match that combination of fervid imagination and exuberant fancy which appears in the "Birds" and the "Clouds," and carries us to enchanted lands of purer air and brighter skies than ours.

The full understanding of the genius of Aristophanes is hindered, not merely by the many local and personal allusions which call for explanation, but by the repugnance of the Christian world to the poet's indelicacy and coarseness of speech, and his audacious exposure of all which modesty seeks to conceal. The plays of Aristophanes are not comedies in the ordinary sense, but rather fantastic entertainments or intellectual debauches. He wrote for Greeks who worshipped the god of vintage with hearts made merry with wine, thrilled to wildest enthusiasm by music which accompanied their orgies. Thus the Greek race exalted the animal functions of man, mixing piety with the pleasures of the senses, and debaucheries with divine bliss. Christianity, which regards the body as the temple of the spirit, repudiates the subjection of man to the animal, and consequently looks upon Aristophanes as the representative of a past age, whose immoral forms of worship advancing civilization must annihilate.

THE WORSHIPPER OF THE CLOUDS.

ARISTOPHANES in his "Clouds" ridicules Socrates and attacks him as trying to substitute the worship of the Clouds for that of Zeus and the other recognized divinities. Strepsiades, an old Athenian, harassed with debts on account of his spendthrift son, goes to the school of Socrates, hoping to learn some way of cheating his creditors. There the philosopher is found outside suspended in a basket. He is engaged in contemplation, but is induced to descend and receive the new applicant. Strepsiades, having declared his willingness to be initiated, is told to sit on a sacred couch and put on a chaplet. Then a basket of stones is emptied on his head, while he crouches in fear. Socrates invokes the Clouds in a sublime hymn, and these deities approach in the form of lofty women.

Socrates. Look towards Mount Parnes as I point—There, there!
Now they descend the hill; I see them plainly,
As plain as can be.
Strepsiades. Where, where? I pr'ythee, show me.
Soc. Here! a whole troop of them, through woods and hollows,
A bye-way of their own.
Streps. What ails my eyes,
That I can't catch a glimpse of them?
Soc. Behold!
Here, at the very entrance—
Streps. Never trust me,
If yet I see them clearly.
Soc. Then you must be
Sand-blind or worse.
Streps. Nay, now by father Jove,
I cannot choose but see them—precious creatures!
For in good faith here's plenty and to spare.

Enter Chorus of Clouds.

Soc. And didst thou doubt if they were goddesses?
Streps. Not I, so help me! only I'd a notion
That they were fog, and dew, and dusty vapor.
Soc. For shame! Why, man, these are the nursing-mothers
Of all our famous sophists, fortune-tellers,
Quacks, medicine-mongers, bards bombastical,
Chorus projectors, star interpreters,
And wonder-making cheats—the gang of idlers,

Who pay them for their feeding with good store
Of flattery and mouth-worship.
Streps. Now I see
Whom we may thank for driving them along
At such a furious dithyrambic rate,
Sun-shadowing clouds of many-color'd hues,
Air-rending tempests, hundred-headed Typhons;
Now rousing, rattling them about our ears,
Now gently wafting them adown the sky,
Moist, airy, bending, bursting into showers;
For all which fine descriptions these poor knaves
Dine daintily on scraps.
Soc. And proper fare;
What better do they merit?
Streps. Under favor,
If these be clouds, (d'you mark me?) very clouds,
How came they metamorphosed into women?
Clouds are not such as these.
Soc. And what else are they?
Streps. Troth, I can't rightly tell, but I should guess
Something like flakes of wool, not women, sure;
And look, these dames have noses.
Soc. Hark you, friend,
I'll put a question to you.
Streps. Out with it!
Be quick; let's have it.
Soc. This it is in short—
Hast thou ne'er seen a cloud, which thou couldst fancy
Shaped like a centaur, leopard, wolf or bull?
Streps. Yea, marry, have I, and what then?
Soc. Why then,
Clouds can assume what shapes they will, believe me;
For instance: should they spy some hairy clown
Rugged and rough, and like the unlicked cub
Of Xenophantes, straight they turn to centaurs,
And kick at him for vengeance.
Streps. Well done, Clouds!
But should they spy that peculating knave,
Simon—that public thief—how would they treat him?
Soc. As wolves—in character most like his own.
Streps. Aye, there it is now; when they saw Cleonymus,

That dastard runaway, they turned to hinds
In honor of his cowardice.
Soc. And now,
Having seen Cleisthenes, to mock his lewdness
They changed themselves to women.
Streps. Welcome, ladies!
Imperial ladies, welcome! An' it please
Your highnesses so far to grace a mortal,
Give me a touch of your celestial voices.
Clouds. Hail, grandsire! who at this late hour of life
Wouldst go to school for cunning; and all hail,
Thou prince pontifical of quirks and quibbles,
Speak thy full mind, make known thy wants and wishes!
Thee and our worthy Prodicus excepted,
Not one of all your sophists have our ear:
Him for his wit and learning we esteem,
Thee for thy proud deportment and high looks,
In bare-foot beggary strutting up and down,
Content to suffer mockery for our sake,
And carry a grave face whilst others laugh.
Streps. Oh! mother Earth, was ever voice like this,
So reverend, so portentous, so divine?
Soc. These are your only deities, all else
I flout at.
Streps. Hold! Olympian Jupiter—
Is he no god?
Soc. What Jupiter? what god?
Pr'ythee no more—away with him at once!
Streps. Say'st thou? Who gives us rain? answer me that!
Soc. These give us rain; as I will straight demonstrate:
Come on now—When did you e'er see it rain
Without a cloud? If Jupiter gives rain,
Let him rain down his favors in the sunshine,
Nor ask the clouds to help him.
Streps. You have hit it,
'Tis so; heaven help me! I did think till now,
When 'twas his godship's pleasure, he made water
Into a sieve and gave the earth a shower.
But hark ye me, who thunders? tell me that;
For then it is I tremble.
Soc. These—these thunder,
When they are tumbled.

Streps. How, blasphemer, how?
Soc. When they are charg'd with vapors full to th' bursting,
And bandied to and fro against each other,
Then with the shock they burst and crack amain.
Streps. And who is he that jowls them thus together
But Zeus himself?
Soc. Zeus! 'tis not Zeus that does it,
But the ætherial Vortex.
Streps. What is he?
I never heard of him; is he not Zeus?
Or is Zeus put aside and Vortex crown'd
King of Olympus in his state and place?
But let me learn some more of this same thunder.
Soc. Have you not learnt? I told you how the Clouds,
Being surcharged with vapor, rush together,
And, in the conflict, shake the poles with thunder.
Streps. Let that pass,
And tell me of the lightning, whose quick flash
Burns us to cinders; that, at least, great Zeus
Keeps in reserve to launch at perjury.
Soc. Dunce, dotard! were you born before the flood
To talk of perjury, whilst Simon breathes,
Theorus and Cleonymus, whilst they,
Thrice-perjured villains, brave the lightning's stroke,
And gaze the heavens unscorched? Would these escape?
Why, man, Jove's random fires strike his own fane,
Strike Sunium's guiltless top, strike the dumb oak,
Who never yet broke faith or falsely swore.
Streps. It may be so, good sooth! You talk this well:
But I would fain be taught the natural cause
Of these appearances.
Soc. Mark. When the winds,
In their free courses check'd, are pent and purs'd,
As 'twere within a bladder, stretching then
And struggling for expansion, they burst forth
With cracks so fierce as sets the air on fire.
Streps. The devil they do! why, now the murder's out:
Clouds. The envy of all Athens shalt thou be,
Happy old man, who from our lips dost suck
Into thy ears true wisdom, so thou art
But wise to learn, and studious to retain

What thou hast learnt; patient to bear the blows
And buffets of hard fortune; to persist,
Doing or suffering; firmly to abide
Hunger and cold, not craving where to dine,
To drink, to sport, and trifle time away;
But holding that for best, which best becomes
A man who means to carry all things through
Neatly, expertly, perfect at all points,
With head, hands, tongue, to force his way to fortune.
  Streps. Be confident; I give myself for one
Of a tough heart, watchful as care can make me,
A frugal, pinching fellow, that can sup
Upon a sprig of savory and to bed;
I am your man for this, hard as an anvil.
  Soc. 'Tis well, so you will ratify your faith
In these our deities—CHAOS and CLOUDS
And SPEECH—to these, and only these, adhere.
  Streps. If from this hour henceforth I ever waste
A single thought on any other gods,
Or give them sacrifice, libation, incense,
Nay, even common courtesy, renounce me.
  Clouds. Speak your wish boldly, then, so shall you prosper,
As you obey and worship us, and study
The wholesome art of thriving.
  Streps. Gracious ladies,
I ask no mighty favor, simply this—
Let me but distance every tongue in Greece,
And run 'em out of sight a hundred lengths.
  Clouds. Is that all?—then we are your friends to serve you;
We will endow thee with such powers of speech,
As henceforth not a demagogue in Athens
Shall spout such popular harangues as thou shalt.
  Streps. A fig for powers of spouting! give me powers
Of non-suiting my creditors.
  Clouds. A trifle—
Granted as soon as asked; only be bold,
And show yourself obedient to your teachers.
  Streps. With your help so I will, being undone,
Stript of my pelf by these high-blooded cattle,
And a fine dame, the torment of my life.
Now let them work their wicked will upon me;
They're welcome to my carcass: let 'em claw it,

Starve it with thirst and hunger, fry it, freeze it,
Nay, flay the very skin off; 'tis their own;
So that I may but fob my creditors,
Let the world talk; I care not though it call me
A bold-faced, loud-tongued, overbearing bully;
A shameless, vile, prevaricating cheat;
A tricking, quibbling, double-dealing knave;
A prating, pettifogging limb o' the law;
A sly old fox, a perjurer, a hang-dog;
A ragamuffin made of shreds and patches,
The leavings of a dunghill. Let 'em rail,
Yea, marry, let 'em turn my guts to fiddle-strings.
May my bread be my poison! if I care.
Clouds. This fellow hath a prompt and daring spirit—
Come hither, sir; do you perceive and feel
What great and glorious fame you shall acquire
By this our schooling of you?
Streps. What, I pray you?
Clouds. What, but to live the envy of mankind
Under our patronage.
Streps. What shall I see
Those halcyon days?
Clouds. Then shall your doors be thronged
With clients waiting for your coming forth,
All eager to consult you, pressing all
To catch a word from you, with abstracts, briefs,
And cases ready drawn for your opinion.
(*To Socrates*) But come, begin and lecture this old fellow;
Sift him, that we may see what meal he's made of.
Soc. Hark ye, let's hear what principles you hold,
That these being known, I may apply such tools
As tally with your stuff.
Streps. Tools! by the gods;
Are you about to spring a mine upon me?
Soc. Not so, but simply in the way of practice
To try your memory.
Streps. Oh! as for that
My memory is of two sorts, long and short:
With them that owe me aught, it never fails;
My creditors, indeed, complain of it
As very apt to leak and lose its reck'ning,

Soc. But let us hear if nature hath endow'd you
With any grace of speaking.
Streps. None of speaking,
But a most apt propensity to cheating.
Soc. If this be all, how can you hope to learn?
Streps. Fear me not, never break your head for that.
Soc. Well, then be quick, and when I speak of things
Mysterious and profound, see that you make
No boggling, but—
Streps. I understand your meaning;
You'd have me bolt philosophy by mouthfuls,
Just like a hungry cur.
Soc. Oh! brutal, gross
And barbarous ignorance! I much suspect,
Old as thou art, thou must be taught with stripes.
Tell me now, when thou art beaten, what dost feel?
Streps. The blows of him that beats me do I feel;
But having breathed a while, I lay my action
And cite my witnesses; anon, more cool,
I bring my cause into the court, and sue
For damages.
Soc. Strip off your cloak! prepare.
Streps. Prepare for what? What crime have I committed?
Soc. None; but the rule and custom is with us
That all shall enter naked.
Streps. And why naked?
I come with no search-warrant, fear me not:
I'll carry nought away with me.
Soc. No matter;
Conform yourself, and strip.
Streps. And if I do,
Tell me, for my encouragement, to which
Of all your scholars will you liken me.
Soc. You shall be call'd a second Chærephon.*
Streps. Ah! Chærephon is but another name
For a dead corpse,—excuse me.
Soc. No more words:
Pluck up your courage, answer not, but follow;
Haste and be perfected.
Streps. Give me my dole

---

* A pupil of Socrates, notoriously thin and pale.

Of honey-cake[*] in hand, and pass me on;
Ne'er trust me if I do not quake and tremble
As if the cavern of Trophonius yawn'd,
And I were stepping in.
Soc. What ails you? enter!
Why do you halt and loiter at the door?
[*Socrates and Strepsiades enter the house.*
Clouds. Go, brave adventurer, proceed!
May fortune crown the gallant deed;
Though far advanced in life's last stage,
Spurning the infirmities of age,
Thou can'st to youthful labors rise,
And boldly struggle to be wise.

THE CHORUS OF BIRDS.

Ye children of man! whose life is a span,
Protracted with sorrow from day to day;
Naked and featherless, feeble and querulous,
Sickly, calamitous creatures of clay!
Attend to the words of the sovereign birds,
Immortal, illustrious lords of the air,
Who survey from on high, with a merciful eye,
Your struggles of misery, labor and care.
Whence you may learn and clearly discern
Such truths as attract your inquisitive turn—
Which is busied of late with a mighty debate,
A profound speculation about the creation,
And organical life and chaotical strife—
With various notions of heavenly motions,
And rivers and oceans, and valleys and mountains,
And sources of fountains, and meteors on high,
And stars in the sky. . . . We propose by-and-by
(If you'll listen and hear) to make it all clear.
All lessons of primary daily concern
You have learned from the birds (and continue to learn),
Your best benefactors and early instructors.
We give you the warnings of seasons returning:
When the cranes are arranged, and muster afloat

---

[*] Honey-cake was used in religious ceremonies in the cave of Trophonius.

In the middle air, with a creaking note,
Steering away to the Libyan sands,
Then careful farmers sow their lands;
The craggy vessel is hauled ashore;
The sail, the ropes, the rudder, and oar
Are all unshipped and housed in store.
The shepherd is warned, by the kite re-appearing,
To muster his flock and be ready for shearing.
You quit your old cloak at the swallow's behest,
In assurance of summer, and purchase a vest.
  For Delphi, for Ammon, Dodona—in fine,
For every oracular temple and shrine—
The birds are a substitute, equal and fair;
For on us you depend, and to us you repair
For counsel and aid when a marriage is made—
A purchase, a bargain, or venture in trade:
Unlucky or lucky, whatever has struck ye—
A voice in the street, or a slave that you meet,
A name or a word by chance overheard—
If you deem it an omen you call it a *bird;*
And if birds are your omens, it clearly will follow
That birds are a proper prophetic Apollo.

THE BEGGAR'S SUIT.

IN "The Acharnians" the countryman Dicæopolis, tired of the war with Sparta, makes a private peace with the enemy. When this is discovered, he is brought before the Athenian Assembly to be tried for treason. As humble suitors were more likely to receive mercy, he wishes to appear in a poor dress. The poet represents him as repairing to the house of Euripides, who in his tragedies had brought on the stage various heroes in distress, and begging for the dress of one of these.

Servant. Who's there?
Dicæopolis. Euripides within?
Serv. Within, yet not within. You comprehend me?
Dic. Within and not within! why, what d'ye mean?
Serv. I speak correctly, old sire! his outward man
Is in the garret writing tragedy;
While his essential being is abroad,
Pursuing whimsies in the world of fancy.
Dic. O happy Euripides, with such a servant,
So clever and accomplished!—Call him out.

Serv. It's quite impossible.
Dic. But it must be done.
Positively and absolutely I must see him;
Or I must stand here rapping at the door.
Euripides! Euripides! come down,
If ever you came down in all your life!
'Tis I—'tis Dicæopolis from Chollidæ.
Euripides. I'm not at leisure to come down.
Dic. Perhaps—
But here's the scene-shifter can wheel you round.*
Eur. It cannot be.
Dic. But, however, notwithstanding——
Eur. Well, there then, I'm wheeled round; for I had not time
For coming down.
Dic. Euripides, I say!
Eur. What say ye?
Dic. Euripides! Euripides!
Good lawk, you're there! up-stairs! you write up-stairs,
Instead of the ground floor? always up-stairs?
Well, now, that's odd! But, dear Euripides,
If you had but a suit of rags that you could lend me!
You're he that brings out cripples in your tragedies,
A'n't ye? You're the new poet, he that writes
Those characters of beggars and blind people?
Well, dear Euripides, if you could but lend me
A suit of tatters from a cast-off tragedy!
For mercy's sake, for I'm obliged to make
A speech in my own defence before the Chorus,
A long pathetic speech, this very day;
And if it fails, the doom of death betides me.
Eur. Say, what d'ye seek? is it the woful garb
In which the wretched aged Æneus acted?
Dic. No, 'twas a wretcheder man than Æneus, much.
Eur. Was it blind Phœnix?
Dic. No, not Phœnix, no.
A fellow a great deal wretcheder than Phœnix.
Eur. Whom may he mean! or whose the robe may suit him!
Speak you of Philoctetes, friend, the beggar?

---

* The only change of scene on the Athenian stage was made by wheeling round the semi-circular house which stood at the back.

Dic. You miss the mark a hundred miles in beggary.
Eur. I reach you: 'twas the robe worn by Bellerophon—
Dic. 'Twas one, in truth, of the same stamp: lame, beggarly,—
A man that had large gift of speech and tongue.
Eur. 'Tis Telephus of Mysia.
Dic. Thou hast hit it.
Thou wouldst not do the thing might cross my ends:—
The loan of those same sorry rags I beg you.
Eur. (*to his servant*). Reach them, and crown his wishes, boy—they lie
Above the Thyestean rags, midway
'Twixt them and Ino's.
Serv. (*to Dicæopolis*). Sir, you are possess'd
Of all you wish.
Dic. (*dressing himself*). Now Jove (and as the god
Of loop'd and window'd raggedness I pray you)
Your sacred blessing, while I try to garb me
In plight most miserable. Thou hast done me
Most timely grace, Euripides:—wouldst win
My whole affection? add a loan (it were
Not fitting to divorce it from these rags),
And cast upon my head a Mysian bonnet.
I must put on the beggar, and dislikening
The truth, be what I am, and seem what I
Am not—possessing the spectators here
Of my true bearing, while the Chorus gape,
Unweeting who it is that speaks, and bearing
All taunts and jeers I choose to put upon them.
Eur. Thou show'st a teeming wit—want shall not fool it (*giving a bonnet*).
Dic. For thee, heaven prosper thee;—for Telephus
Befall what lies within my thoughts: I have
A pregnant wit, and words flow plentifully.
But softly, I must have a beggar's staff.
Eur. Here's one unto your hand, take it, and let
Your back cast shadow on these doors.
Dic. Seest, my soul,
That we must fain divorce us from this gate?
And yet my needs still ask a world of tire;
Rub oil upon thee, soul;—twist, wriggle, crouch,
Till he do crown thy wishes. Good Euripides,

Favor me with a beggar's basket; 'tis
No matter though a torch have singed it.
Eur. What's thy need on't?
Dic. None—beyond the wish to have it.
Eur. Away, and quit my doors: thou breedest trouble.
Dic. (*aside*). A pestilence upon thee! (*Aloud*) Happy bard,
Heaven fortune thee, as erst thy lady mother!
Eur. Will thou begone?
Dic. Not till I have my craving:
One little cup, so please you; one whose lip
Hath lost its wholeness—
Eur. Take it and begone:
Your presence breeds disturbance.
Dic. But, sweet Euripides! I fain would have
A pipkin with a cleanly sponge to wipe it.
Eur. The man will rob me of a tragedy complete.
Content your wish with this; and now away (*giving a pipkin*).
Dic. I have an ear to your request: one thing
Remains: that one not granted me—I am
A ruin'd man;—crown it, and I am gone
For ever. Telephus bore leaves and herbs;—
A scantling of the same within my basket.
Eur. The man will be my ruin; see, 'tis granted (*giving him leaves*):
A whole play lost, as I'm a living man.
Dic. This timely grace completes me: I retire—
It is too plain my presence breeds offence.
These eyes know not to turn their view discreet
On mighty men and pay them terms of honor—
A plague upon't, was ever such a wretch!
I have forgot the primest thing of all.
(*Addressing Euripides*) Thou dearest, best of men—I pray thee now
With most petitionary vehemence—
Crown but this one, one longing; if I ask
Aught more, all plagues and maladies light on me!—
Throw for the tender mercy one small potherb—
Thou canst not lack,—thy mother will supply thee.*
Eur. Most frontless impudence! shut-to the door, boy.

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* The enemies of Euripides said that his mother had been a seller of potherbs.

MENANDER.

THOUGH there are but few fragments of the comedies of Menander, he has elicited high praise both from ancient and modern critics. These fragments show, more than other Greek writings, the modern spirit. As Aristophanes was the leader of the Attic Old, or Political Comedy, so Menander was the leader of the New Comedy, or comedy of private life and manners. He wrote more than a hundred comedies, not one of which survives. Latin adaptations of them were made by Terence, who thus won greater fame than his original. The great Cæsar, who was a keen critic, pronounced the Roman writer but a "semi-Menander." These Latin plays became models for later Europe whenever the drama revived. Menander was born in 342 B.C. and died in 291. His writings show the influence of the philosopher Epicurus, whom he describes as rescuing Greece "from unreason as Themistocles had rescued her from slavery."

MAN'S LIFE.

SUPPOSE some god should say, "Die when thou wilt,
Mortal, expect another life on earth;
And, for that life make choice of all creation,
What thou wilt be—dog, sheep, goat, man or horse;
For live again thou must, it is thy fate;
Choose only in what form—there thou art free."
So help me, Crato, I would fairly answer,—
Let me be all things, anything but man!
He only of all creatures feels affliction.
The generous horse is valued for his worth,
And dog by merit is preferred to dog;
The warrior cock is pampered for his courage,
And awes the baser brood—But what is man?
Truth, virtue, valor,—how do they avail him?
Of this world's good the first and greatest share
Is flattery's prize; the informer takes the next,
And barefaced knavery garbles what is left:
I'd rather be an ass than what I am,
And see these villains lord it o'er their betters.

Is Life Worth Living?

The lot of all most fortunate is his,
Who, having stayed just long enough on earth
To feast his sight with the fair face of Nature,
Sun, sea, and clouds, and heaven's bright starry fires,
Drops without pain into an early grave.
For what is life, the longest life of man,
But the same scene repeated o'er and o'er?
A few more lingering days to be consumed
In throngs and crowds, with sharpers, knaves and thieves;
From such the speediest riddance is the best.

The Proper Use of Wealth.

Weak is the vanity that boasts of riches,
For they are fleeting things; were they not such,
Could they be yours to all succeeding time,
'Twere wise to let none share in the possession;
But, if whate'er you have is held of Fortune;
And not of right inherent, why, my father,
Why, with such niggardly jealousy engross
What the next hour may ravish from your grasp,
And cast into some worthless favorite's lap?
Snatch then the swift occasion while 'tis yours;
Put this unstable boon to noble uses;
Foster the wants of men, impart your wealth,
And purchase friends; 'twill be more lasting treasure,
And when misfortune comes, your best resource.

PHILEMON.

Philemon, though inferior to Menander, was a great favorite with the Athenians, and often defeated his rival in the dramatic contests. Though born at Soli, in Cilicia, he spent most of his life in Athens, where he had been admitted to citizenship. He began to exhibit plays about 330 B.C., and is said to have composed altogether ninety-seven, yet only a few fragments of them remain. His favorite subjects were love intrigues, as was usually the case in the New Comedy, which he inaugurated. He is said to have died in the theatre, during the performance of one of his own compositions.

THE HONEST MAN.

ALL are not just, because they do no wrong,
But he, who will not wrong me when he may,
He is the truly just. I praise not them,
Who, in their petty dealings pilfer not,
But him, whose conscience spurns a secret fraud,
When he might plunder and defy surprise:
His be the praise, who, looking down with scorn
On the false judgment of the partial herd,
Consults his own clear heart, and boldly dares
To be—not to be thought—an honest man.

THE HIGHEST GOOD.

PHILOSOPHERS consume much time and pains
To seek the sovereign good; nor is there one
Who yet hath struck upon it. Virtue some,
And Prudence some contend for, whilst the knot
Grows harder by their struggles to untie it.
I, a mere clown, in turning up the soil,
Have dug the secret forth—All-gracious Jove!
'Tis Peace, most lovely, and of all beloved;
Peace is the bounteous goddess who bestows
Weddings and holidays and joyous feasts,
Relations, friends, health, plenty, social comforts,
And pleasures which alone make life a blessing.

ON TEARS.

IF tears could medicine human ills, and give
The o'ercharged heart a sweet restorative,
Gold, jewels, splendor, all we reckon dear,
Were mean and worthless to a single tear.
But ah! nor treasures bribe, nor raining eyes,
Our firm, inexorable destinies;
Weep we or not, as sun succeeds to sun,
In the same course our fates unpitying run.
Tears yet are ours, whene'er misfortunes press,
And though our weeping fails to give redress,
Long as their fruits the changing seasons bring,
Those bitter drops will flow from Sorrow's spring.

HERMESIANAX.

This elegiac poet, born at Colophon, lived in the time of Alexander the Great. His chief work bore the name of his mistress, Leontium, and from it the following fragment has been preserved.

The Loves of Poets and Sages.

Such was the nymph whom Orpheus led
From the dark mansions of the dead,
Where Charon with his lazy boat
Ferries o'er Lethe's sedgy moat;
The undaunted minstrel smites the strings,
His strain through hell's vast concave rings;
Cocytus hears the plaintive theme,
And refluent turns his pitying stream;
Three-headed Cerberus, by fate
Posted at Pluto's iron gate,
Low-crouching rolls his haggard eyes
Ecstatic, and foregoes the prize;
With ears erect, at hell's wide doors,
Lies listening as the songster soars:
Thus music charmed the realm beneath,
And beauty triumph'd over death.

The bard, whom night's pale regent bore
In secret on the Athenian shore,
Musæus, felt the sacred flame,
And burnt for the fair Theban dame,
Antiope, whom mighty Love
Made pregnant by imperial Jove;
The poet plied his amorous strain,
Press'd the fond fair, nor press'd in vain;
For Ceres, who the veil undrew,
That screen'd her mysteries from view,
Propitious this kind truth reveal'd,
That woman close-besieged will yield.

Homer, of all past bards the prime,
And wonder of all future time,
Whom Jove with wit sublimely blest,
And touched with purest fire his breast,

From gods and heroes turned away
To warble the domestic lay,
And, wandering to the desert isle,
On whose parch'd rocks no seasons smile,
In distant Ithaca was seen
Chanting the suit-repelling queen.

Old Hesiod, too, his native shade
Made vocal to the Ascræan maid:
The bard his heaven-directed lore
Forsook, and hymn'd the gods no more;
Soft, love-sick ditties now he sung,
Love touch'd his harp, love tuned his tongue,
Silenced his Heliconian lyre,
And quite put out religion's fire.

Mimnermus tuned his amorous lay,
When time had turned his temples gray;
Love revelled in his aged veins,
Soft was his lyre and sweet his strains;
Frequenter of the wanton feast,
Nanno his theme and youth his guest.

Alcæus strung his sounding lyre,
And smote it with a hand of fire,
To Sappho, fondest of the fair,
Chanting the loud and lofty air.

E'en Sophocles, whose honey'd lore
Rivals the bee's delicious store,
Chorus'd the praise of wine and love,
Choicest of all the gifts of Jove.

Pythagoras, whose boundless soul
Scaled the wide globe from pole to pole,
Earth, planets, seas, and heavens above,
Yet found no spot secure from love,
With love declines unequal war,
And, trembling, drags his conqueror's car;
Theano clasped him in her arms,
And Wisdom stooped to Beauty's charms.

E'en Socrates, whose moral mind
With truth enlighten'd all mankind,

When at Aspasia's side he sate,
Still found no end to love's debate;
For strong indeed must be the heart
Where love finds no unguarded part.

Sage Aristippus, by right rule
Of logic, purged the sophists' school,
Check'd folly in its headlong course,
And swept it down by reason's force;
Till Venus aimed the heartfelt blow,
And laid the mighty victor low.

HERONDAS.

AMONG the singular relics of antiquity recovered from the sands of Egypt, not the least remarkable are seven mimes of Herondas. A mime was a short dramatic interlude, originally in prose, but later in a kind of iambic verse. Herondas was an Ionian Greek, and lived probably about 250 B.C. Though his mimes were intended for the stage, they resemble certain idylls of Theocritus more than the works of any other Greek author extant. They are more exact pictures of real life than the comedies afford. The translations are by J. A. Symonds.

THE BAD BOY TAKEN TO SCHOOL.

Lampriscus, the master, is seated in school. Enter Metrotima dragging her son Kottalos.

Metrotima. May the dear Muses send you something to enjoy, and may you have pleasure in life; so you will promise to drub this boy of mine, till the soul of him, drat it, is left nowhere in his body but the lips. He has ruined me by playing pitch and toss. Yes, Lampriscus, it seems that knuckle-bones are not enough for him; but he must needs be running after worse mischief. Where the door of the grammar-master stands, or when the cursed tax-day comes round—let me scream like Nannakos—he cannot tell. But the gambling-place, where street-porters and runaways take up their quarters, is so well known to him that he will point it out to strangers. The unhappy tablets, which I take the pains to spread with wax each month, lie abandoned by his bed-post next the wall, unless perchance he casts a glance on them as though they were the devil; and then, instead of writing something nice, he rubs them bare. His dice—that litter about among the bellows and the nets—are shinier than our oil-flask which we use for everything. But as for spelling out a word, he does not even know his alpha, unless one shouts it five times in his ears. The day before yesterday, when his father was teaching him Maron, what did the pretty fellow do but go and turn Maron into Simon? so that I am driven to call myself a fool for not making him a donkey-boy, instead of putting him to study in the hope of having a support for my declining years. Then if we make him repeat some child's speech—I, or his father, an old man with bad eyes and deaf,—the words run out of his head like water from a bottle with a hole in it. "Apollo the hunter!" I cry out; "even your granny will recite what one asks, and yet she has no schooling—or the first Phrygian you meet upon the road." But it's no use scolding, for if we go on, he runs away from home, stays out three days and nights, sponging upon his grandmother, poor old blind woman; or else he squats up there upon the roof, with his legs stretched out, like a tame ape, peering down. Just fancy what his wretched mother suffers when she sees him there. I don't care so much about him indeed. But he smashes all the roofing into broken biscuits; and when winter comes, I have to pay two shillings for each tile, with tears of anger in my eyes. All the neighbors sing the same old song: "Yonder's the work of master Kottalos, that boy of Metrotima's." And true it is; and I daren't wag a tooth in answer. Look at his back too, how he's scratched it all over in the wood, till he's no better than a Delian fisher with the creel who doits his life away at sea. Yet he casts feast-days and holidays better than a professional stargazer: not even sleep will catch him forgetting when you're off your guard. So I beseech you, Lampriscus, and may these blessed ladies* give you prosperous life, and may you light on lucky days, do not ——

Lampriscus. Nay, Metrotima, you need not swear at him; it will not make him get the less. (*Calls to his pupils.*) Euthies, where are you? Ho, Kokkalos! ho, Phillos! Hurry up, and hoist the urchin on your shoulders; show the full moon, I say! (*Addresses Kottalos.*) I commend your ways of going on, Kottalos—fine ways, forsooth! It's not enough for you to cast dice, like the other boys here; but you must needs be running to the gambling-house and tossing coppers with the common porters! I'll make you more modest than a girl. You shan't stir a straw even, if that's what you want. Where is my cutting switch, the bull's tail, with which I lamm into jail-birds and good-for-nothings. Give it me, quick, before I hawk my bile up.

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* The Muses, whose statues adorn the school-room.

Kottalos. Nay, prithee, Lampriscus, I pray you by the Muses, by your beard, by the soul of Kottis, do not flog me with that cutting switch.

L. But, Kottalos, you are so gone in wickedness that there's not a slave-dealer who'd speak well of you—no, not even in some savage country where the mice gnaw iron.

K. How many stripes, Lampriscus; tell me, I beg, how many are you going to lay on?

L. Don't ask me—ask her. [*Lampriscus begins to flog the boy.*

K. Oh! oh! how many are you going to give me, if I can last out alive?

Metrotima. As many as the cruel hide can bear, I tell you.

K. Stop, stop, I've had enough, Lampriscus.

L. Do you then stop your naughtiness!

K. Never, never again will I be naughty. I swear, Lampriscus, by the dear Muses.

M. What a tongue you've got in your head, you! I'll shut your mouth up with a gag if you go on bawling.

K. Nay, then, I am silent. Please don't murder me!

L. Let him go, Kokkalos.

M. Don't stop, Lampriscus, flog him till the sun goes down——

L. But he's more mottled than a water-snake——

M. And he ought to get at least twenty more——

L. In addition to his book?—

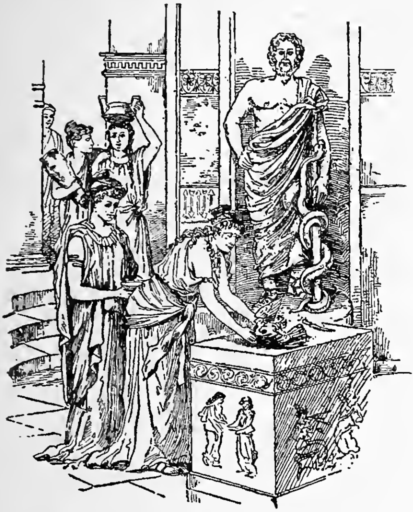
M. Even though he learned to read better than Clio herself.

K. Yah! yah!

M. Stop your jaw till you've rinsed it with honey. I shall make a careful report of this to my old man, Lampriscus, when I get home; and shall come back quickly with fetters; we'll clamp his feet together; then let him jump about for the Muses he hated to look down on.

THE TEMPLE OF ASKLEPIOS.

Enter Coan women—Kokkale, Kunno, and their servants, and the Guardian of the Shrine.



Kokkale. Hail to thee, Monarch Paiôn, who rulest over Tricca, and hast thy habitation in delightful Cos and Epidaurus; greetings to thee and to Coronis who gave thee birth, and to Apollo; as also to her whom with right hand thou touchest, Hygieia; you too, whose are these honored altars, Panacea, Epione, Iaso, hail; and ye who laid the dwellings and the walls of Laomedon waste, Podaleirios and Machaon, healers of savage diseases, hail to you, together with all gods and goddesses that sojourn at thy hearth, Sire Paiôn; propitiously accept, I pray, this cock, whilom the chanticleer of house and home, whom here I sacrifice; and take thereof the dainty bits. It is not much or serviceable that we draw from; else had we gladly brought an ox or fatted sow, and not a barn-door cock, in recompense for kind medicaments of fleshly ills, which thou didst wipe away, O King, laying thereon thy gentle hands.

[*She begins to arrange the offerings.*

Kunno. Place the tablet, Kokkale, on the right hand of Hygieia.

[*Then they look round the temple.*

Ko. O my dear Kunno, what a sight of lovely statues! Tell me who was the sculptor who wrought this marble, and who was the man who set it up here?

Ku. The sons of Praxiteles. Don't you see that inscription on the pedestal? And Euthies, the son of Praxon, gave them to the temple.

Ko. I invoke the blessings of Paiôn upon those craftsmen, and also on Euthies for such goodly workmanship. Look, dear, at that little girl there, lifting her eyes to the apple! Wouldn't one say that if she did not get the apple she would faint? And then, Kunno, that old man! Good gracious, how the boy is strangling the fox-goose!

Ku. Before our very noses, and unless we knew that it is stone, you would say that he was going to speak. Certes, the time is coming when men will be able to put life into senseless stones.

Ko. Yes; for, Kunno, see that statue of Battale, Myttis' daughter, how it stands! If some one had never seen Battale, and were to look at this portrait of her, he need not ask for flesh and blood.

Ku. Follow me, dear, and I will show you something, the like of which for beauty you never saw in your whole life. (*Turning to the servant.*) Kudilla, go and call the sacristan. What, ain't I talking to you, while you gaze around there? On my soul, but she won't attend to what I say! She stands and stares at me wider than a crab. Go, I say, and call the sacristan. You glutton, there's neither holy man nor layman who will call you worth your salt. It's all the same where you are. I take this god to witness, Kudilla, how you set me on fire with fury, though I do not want to rage. I take him to witness, I repeat, the day will come, when I shall make the razor shave your poll.

Ko. She is a slave, and dulness weighs like lead on slavish ears.

Ku. But day is breaking, and the crowd is pressing on all round. (*To the servant, who is setting off to look for the sacristan.*) Ho, you, stop! The gates have been thrown back, and the shrine is open. [*The women go in, and examine the pictures on the walls.*

Ko. My dear Kunno, only look, what lovely things! Wouldn't one say that another Athene had come down to carve these beauties! (But may the Queen herself be blessed!) That naked boy there; if I were to pinch him, wouldn't he be wounded, Kunno? For the flesh is laid upon him, hot, hot, quivering on the panel. And the silver tongs—I swear if Mueleos, or Pataikiskos, the son of Lamprion, could see them, their eyes would jump out of the sockets, thinking them to be real silver. That ox too, and the man who is leading him, and the woman walking with them, and the hook-nosed, and the snub-faced fellow, don't they all look just the living day? If I did not think it would be doing more than woman ought, I should have shrieked out for fear the beast would hurt me! He is glaring so with one eye, Kunno.

Ku. Yes, dear, for the hands of the Ephesian Apelles put the soul of truth into everything he painted; nor can one say "That man could see one thing, and was denied another;" but whoever, even of the gods, it came into his mind to attempt, on he sped right forwards. If a man has seen him or his works without the due astonishment they merit, he ought to be hung up by the foot in a fuller's shop.

The Sacristan. (*Entering after having attended to the sacrifice of the cock.*) Ladies, your offerings have turned out fair, in all points perfect, and augur for the best. No one has afforded more gratification to Paiôn than you have done. Io, io, Paiôn! Be gracious for their fair sacrifices to these ladies, and if they are wedded, to their husbands, and their next of kindred. Io, io, Paiôn! May these things be!

Ko. Yea, let it be so, Mightiest! And send us to come again in health, and bring a costlier offering, in company with husbands and children.

ÆSOP.

FABLE was long considered an especial contribution of Greek genius to the literature of the world. It is now known to have been of Oriental, possibly of Indian, origin; yet there are traces of it even in ancient Egyptian and Babylonian inscriptions. It seems to have reached the Hellenic race in the sixth century B.C. This primitive mode of instruction became identified with the name of Æsop, who is said to have lived in the time of Solon, about 570 B.C. According to the very late account of his life, he was a slave, hideously ugly, but the classical authors make no mention of his deformity. In spite of his ugliness he charmed his master with his wise apologues, and thus obtained his freedom. Thereupon he visited King Crœsus, who afterwards employed him to carry to Delphi a sum of money for the inhabitants of that sacred place. When a dispute arose over the distribution, the Delphians threw the bearer from a precipice. But a plague arose, and the people, to appease the vengeance of the gods, gave compensation for his death to the grandson of his former master, there being no nearer claimant.

Æsop's fables are mentioned by Aristophanes and other ancient writers. They were in prose, but were turned into verse by various persons. Socrates is said to have employed part of his time in prison in this task. But the only Greek whose versions have been preserved was

Babrius, who seems to have lived about 250 B.C. A Latin version, containing ninety-seven fables, bears the name of Phædrus, who was a freedman of the Emperor Augustus. While many of these are closely imitated from the Greek, the author acknowledges that others are from a different source. The searching criticism of the great scholar, Bentley, proved that the extant fables in Greek prose, ascribed to Æsop, are spurious. They were compiled by Planudes, a monk of Constantinople, in the fourteenth century. The Greek classical writers who refer to Æsop give his stories in their own words, showing that they had not yet any permanent literary form. They belonged to early folk-lore, which passed readily from country to country, and were quickly naturalized. Among other signs of their Oriental origin is the familiar mention of apes and peacocks.

THE LION'S SHARE.

THE Lion, the Fox, the Jackal and the Wolf made an agreement to assist each other in the chase. While hunting they surprised a stag, and soon took its life. The Lion then ordered the others to divide the booty. They skinned the carcass and cut it into four parts. Then the Lion stood forth and gave judgment: "The first quarter belongs to me as King of Beasts; the second is mine as arbiter; the third part falls to me for my labor in the chase; and as for the fourth, let me see who will dare to claim it." As the rest departed the Fox said, "You may share the labors of the great, but you will not share the spoil."

THE FROGS ASK FOR A KING.

THE Frogs dwelling in a marshy lake were grieved at having no ruler, and sent ambassadors to Zeus, begging that a King be given them. Zeus, perceiving their simplicity, cast a huge Log into the lake. The Frogs, terrified at the splash made by its fall, hid themselves for a time; but finding that the Log remained motionless, they ventured forth, and some swam to it, and a few even climbed upon it. But after a while they grew weary of the Log lying idle among them,

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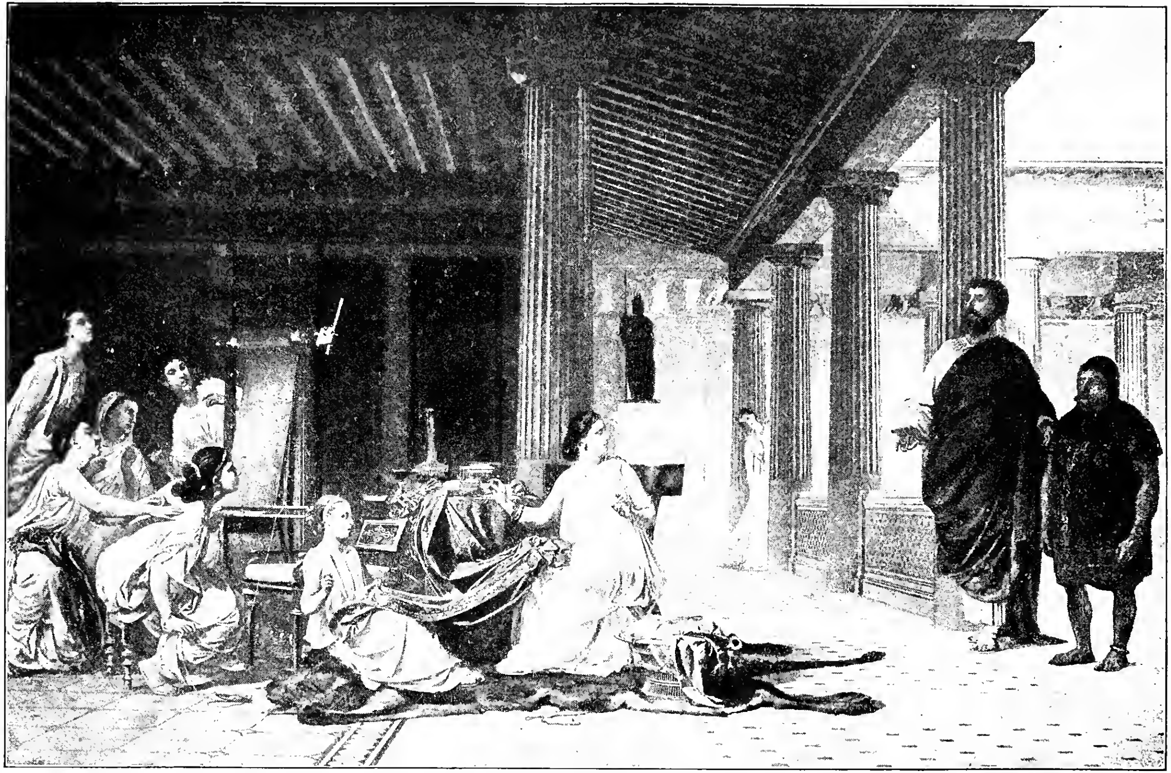


LEON GLAIZE, PINX

ÆSOP BROUGHT TO THE HOUSE OF XANTHUS

and thought themselves ill-treated. So they sent a new petition to Zeus, praying for a real King. Zeus was displeased at their complaint and sent them a Stork. The new King soon began to gobble them up, and the Frogs, repenting of their choice, complained to Zeus, but it was too late. Then said an old Frog, "It is better to have no king, or an idle king, than a cruel king."

THE ASS IN THE LION'S SKIN.

AN ass, finding the skin of a Lion, which hunters had laid out to dry, put it on himself. Going towards his village, he frightened the herds, and even men ran away. Delighted with his prowess he approached his owner, who had often beaten him. The man was at first frightened also, but presently, seeing his long ears stick out, recognized the Ass. Then, taking a cudgel, he beat him soundly and stripped him of his covering. There is no disguise so complete that a wise man cannot detect the truth.

BABRIUS.

BABRIUS was the Greek versifier of Æsop. Though his name was preserved by the grammarians, the period to which he belongs is uncertain. Some put him about 250 B.C., others as many years after Christ. But he nowhere refers to Rome or Italy, and his style favors the earlier date. An imperfect version of his Æsopic fables was found in 1844 in a manuscript of the tenth century in a convent on Mount Athos. It contained one hundred and twenty-three fables. Another part, whose genuineness has been suspected, came to light in 1857. They have all been versified in English by Rev. J. Davies.

THE ARCHER AND THE LION.

A SKILLFUL Archer the hill country sought,
Intent on sport. His coming quickly brought
To every wild beast fear and headlong flight.
The Lion only tarried to invite
The archer's onslaught. "Haste not! Pr'ythee stay,"
The stranger said; "nor hope to win the day.
Learn from mine envoy, whom you soon shall meet,
Your wisest plan." Forth sped his arrow fleet
From no great distance, and was buried deep

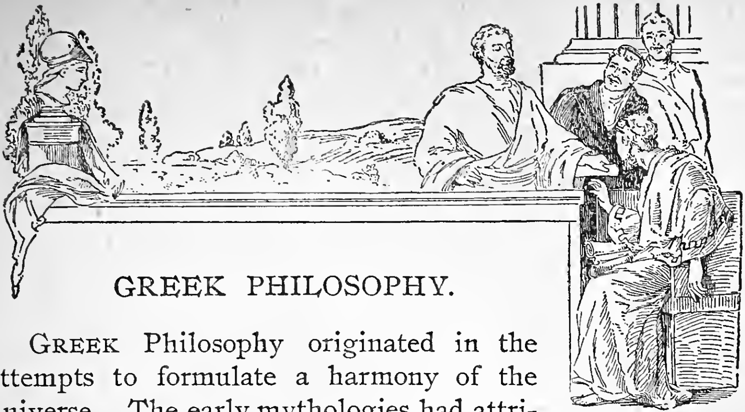
In the beast's flank. Afraid his post to keep,
The wounded Lion straight essayed to fly
To where the lonesome woodland thickets lie.
But, lo! a Fox was standing at his side,
Who urged him still the Archer's shafts to bide
"Not so!" the Lion said; "beguile not me!
Yon envoy came but now so bitterly,
That doubly fierce his master needs must be."

THE NORTH WIND AND THE SUN.

BETWIXT the North wind and the Sun arose
A contest, which would soonest of his clothes
Strip a wayfaring clown; so runs the tale.
First Boreas blows an almost Thracian gale,
Thinking perforce to steal the man's capote:
He loosed it not: but as the cold wind smote
More sharply, tighter round him drew the folds,
And sheltered by a crag his station holds.
But now the Sun at first peered gently forth,
And thawed the chills of the uncanny north;
Then in their turn his beams more amply plied,
Till sudden heat the clown's endurance tried:
Stripping himself, away his cloak he flung:
The Sun from Boreas thus a triumph wrung.
The fable means, "My son, at mildness aim:
Persuasion more results than force may claim."

THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

A WOLF beheld a lambkin once astray,
And did not give brute force at once its way,
But, bent to seize it, found this specious plea:
"Small though you were last year, you slandered me."
"Nay! how last year? A year I've not been born."
"Well, then, you nibbled my own field of corn!"
"I eat nor grass nor corn! A nursling still!"
"Have you not drunk then of my private rill?"
"As yet, my mother's milk's my beverage."
Upsprang the wolf, and ate the lamb in rage.
"A wolf," said he, "can't for his supper wait,
Though all his pleas you may invalidate."



GREEK PHILOSOPHY.

Greek Philosophy originated in the attempts to formulate a harmony of the universe. The early mythologies had attributed the phenomena of the visible world and even the passions of the human soul to a number of beings having various degrees of power and superiority to man. The confusion of these myths was manifest and the attempts of Hesiod and others to arrange and harmonize them were but slightly successful. Great thinkers in the sixth century before Christ endeavored by various theories to set forth the true nature of the world, the reason of its existence and its controlling forces. A glance at the theories of these philosophers has already been given.* These philosophical speculations began in Asia Minor, but flourished most in Southern Italy, called Magna Græcia. The contentions among the various schools promoted the development of a system of persuasive argument, and this method absorbed much attention. When the aristocratic governments gave way in some cities to democratic republics, the power of argument and rhetoric was found to have practical application in political affairs. Accordingly a new class of teachers took the place of the austere philosophers. They were called "Sophists," those who made men wise or smart. Their object was to promote individual success, not to ascertain universal truth. When Athens rose to power after the Persian wars, the instructors in this new practical philosophy flocked to this bustling capital.

The first distinguished Sophist in Athens was Protagoras (480–410 B.C.). He professed to fit his pupils to be prominent citizens, able to perform their part in public assemblies, to advise and persuade their fellow-citizens. Yet he had his system of philosophy. He taught that "Man is the measure of all things," and gave this maxim an individual application. He declined to search into the reality of things, and denied that there is any absolute truth. The only thing worth considering for each man is the present perception: "What appears to each man has real existence for him." On this sandy foundation he built his showy fabric. For such teaching he did not disdain to exact handsome payment. Nor was he alone in his profession. Gorgias was perhaps even more popular. By these Sophists philosophy was brought down from its sublime inquiries into the cause and origin of the world, the nature of gods and men, of good and evil, and was made a tool or instrument of practical success. The evil result of their teaching soon pervaded the whole community.

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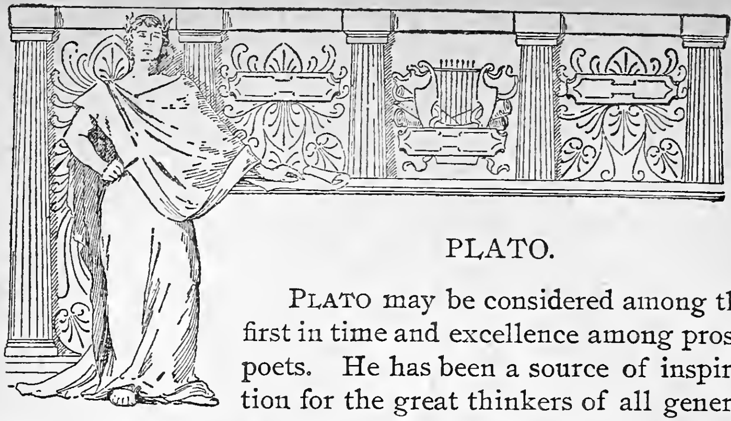
* See Volume IV., pp. 76–83.

The redeemer of moral philosophy was Socrates (469–400 B.C.). Physically a grotesque anomaly among the handsome Athenians, he was yet full of bodily and intellectual vigor. His time was largely spent in the streets of Athens in questioning any who would listen as to the principles of their handicraft, art, or profession. His mother had been a midwife, and he compared himself to her, saying it was his business to assist others to express themselves, to bring their thoughts to light. But the end of his eternal questioning was to assure himself and others that there is a certainty in whatever any man really knows, and that these certainties come under a universal law, which it is the highest wisdom to discover. He adopted as his own the famous maxim of Solon, "Know thyself." The oracle at Delphi pronounced Socrates the wisest of men, and he rejoined, perhaps ironically, that the oracle was so far right that at least he was aware of his own ignorance, while others did not know that they knew nothing. His relentless questioning probed the pretensions of the Sophists, and eventually put them to flight. Though the ungrateful people condemned their best instructor to death, his manner of meeting his fate has given him immortal honor.

The teachings of Socrates have been preserved especially by his pupils Plato and Xenophon, and thus enter into the world's literature. The former appears to have imbibed more of the true spirit of the master, yet the latter reported as correctly as he was fitted to do, the actions and discourses he had seen and heard. Plato has undoubtedly idealized to some extent his beloved teacher, and intermingled with his talk part of his own lofty imagination. Far from attempting to construct an exact or comprehensive system, he sought rather to awaken the conscience to a sense of duty and to stir the sluggish will to noble performance. The dialogues in which he embodied his discussions of truth and virtue and beauty and love are the eternal monument of his fame.

To Plato, the soaring idealist, succeeded his still more learned disciple Aristotle, who took all knowledge for his province. His work was not to arouse the conscience or stimulate the imagination, but to explore and map out what man knows or can discover. He surveyed all regions of nature and mind, physics and metaphysics, logic and rhetoric, poetry and politics. After appraising justly all that had been previously known, he pointed out the true methods of investigation for future discoveries. Under various names, his systems have since ruled the minds of men, both in the intellectual and the moral world.

When Greece lost its political independence, philosophy degenerated. The successors of Aristotle tended first to sensationalism, and finally to materialism. The chief schools which arose were those of the Skeptics, the Epicureans and the Stoics. Pyrrho, the founder of the first, was a contemporary of Aristotle. Maintaining that there is neither in sensation nor in reason any certainty, he taught that man should be tranquil, troubling himself about nothing. The leading doctrine of Epicurus (341–270 B.C.), the founder of the second school, was that happiness, the satisfaction of natural desires, is the supreme good. Though he found the highest pleasure in a virtuous life, the mass of his followers sought it in sensual indulgence. Zeno (about 350–260 B.C.) was the founder of the Stoics, who took their name from the *Stoa Pœcile* (Painted Porch) in which he taught. His doctrine was that the world is the substance of God, who is the universal reason. He gave prominence to ethics, holding that the practice of virtue is the true philosophy.



PLATO.

Plato may be considered among the first in time and excellence among prose-poets. He has been a source of inspiration for the great thinkers of all generations. Of modern English writers, perhaps John Ruskin most nearly approaches the style of Plato in a kind of chastened earnestness and enthusiasm, and a power of passing from lofty poetical flights to the playfulness and pith of homely expression.

Plato was born at Athens in 429 B.C. In youth he was a writer of verses, and the composer of a drama, which he burned when he began to take an interest in philosophy and devote himself to more serious studies. For eight or ten years he was the pupil of Socrates; but after his teacher's condemnation he found it necessary to take refuge with Euclid in Megara. Returning towards the year 386 B.C., he opened his famous school in the grove of Academus within a mile of the city gate. Here among the trees which grew in the enclosure he taught a number of eager pupils for more than twenty years. After more than one brief experience of court life in Syracuse, where he tried but failed to establish a practical application of his philosophy to affairs of state, he resumed his lessons in the Academy. He died in the eighty-second year of his age, 327 B.C.

Plato was not merely a teacher and lecturer; he is acknowledged as the greatest of Greek writers. Beholding the wonderful force of the Socratic method, he introduced into literature the prose dialogue as a vehicle of expression of thought. This form of writing he at once refined and carried to perfection. In order to expound the truths of philosophy, Socrates is made the incarnation of philosophy itself, and takes the leading part in these dialogues. Although requiring consistency in others, Plato himself seems to brush it aside with formality of arrangement and to follow an argument whithersoever it leads him. But this, instead of marring, diversifies the fascinations of his style, and explains his success in adapting philosophy to so many tastes. Imagination, emotion and logic are all combined in his wonderful expository writings. His illustrations are replete with poetical expressions, metaphors, anecdotes and historical events, all of which, although seemingly remote, are gracefully introduced to illumine his subject. The poetic quality is quite apparent; and there is genuine humor also, mostly of that noble kind best adapted to earnest and pathetic passages, which takes the form of irony.

The "Apology" and the "Crito" are intended to portray the ideal Socrates. The former claims to be the speech delivered by Socrates to his accusers, who are completely struck down by the able defence and vigorous cross-examination. The Crito pictures Socrates declining the offer of his friends to help him to escape from prison on the ground that he would then cease to be an example of truth and virtue. The "Phaedo" gives the famous discourse of Socrates on the immortality of the soul, intended as a consolation for his disciples. "The Republic" pictures an ideal commonwealth, and has served as a model for later political disquisitions. "The Symposium" is the most entertaining of the dialogues, wandering at its own sweet will from grave to gay, from earth to heaven.

But let us recall Emerson's verdict: "Among books, Plato only is entitled to Omar's fanatical compliment to the Koran, when he said, 'Burn the libraries; for their value is in this book.' These sentences contain the culture of nations; these are the corner-stone of schools; these are the fountain-head of literatures. . . . The Bible of the learned for twenty-two hundred years, every brisk young man, who says in succession fine things to each reluctant generation,—Boethius, Rabelais, Erasmus, Bruno, Locke, Rousseau, Alfieri, Coleridge,—is some reader of Plato, translating into the vernacular, wittily, his good things. . . . No wife, no children had he, but the thinkers of all civilized nations are his posterity, and are tinged with his mind."

THE VISION OF ER.

"THE Republic" is the longest and perhaps the best of the dialogues of Plato. In addition to his views about an ideal State, it gives in conclusion this vision of the world of the dead and of the transmigration of souls.

Well—said Socrates—I will tell you a tale; not one of those tales which Odysseus tells to the hero Alcinous; yet this, too, is a tale of a brave man, Er, the son of Armenius, a Pamphylian by birth. He was slain in battle, and ten days afterwards, when the bodies of the dead were taken up, already in a state of corruption, his body was unaffected by decay, and carried home to be buried. And on the twelfth day, as he was lying on the funeral pile, he returned to life, and told them what he had seen in the other world.

He said that when he left the body his soul went on a journey with a great company, and that they came to a mysterious place at which there were two chasms in the earth; they were near together, and over against them were two other chasms in the heaven above. In the intermediate space there were judges seated, who bade the just, after they had judged them, ascend by the heavenly way on the right hand, having the signs of the judgment bound on their foreheads. And in like manner the unjust were commanded by them to descend by the lower way on the left hand; these also had the symbols of their deeds fastened on their backs. He drew near, and they told him that he was to be the messenger who would carry the report of the other world to men; and they bade him hear and see all that was to be heard and seen in that place.

Then he beheld and saw on one side the souls departing at either chasm of heaven and earth when sentence had been given them; and at the two other openings other souls, some ascending out of the earth dusty and worn with travel, some descending out of heaven clean and bright. And always on their arrival they seemed as if they had come from a long journey; and they went out into the meadow with joy, and encamped as at a festival; and those who knew one another embraced and conversed, the souls which came from the earth curiously inquiring about the things above, and the souls which came from heaven about the things beneath. And they told one another of what had happened by the way—those from below weeping and sorrowing at the remembrance of the things which they had endured and seen in their journey (now the journey had lasted a thousand years), while those from above were describing heavenly delights and visions of inconceivable beauty.

There is not time to tell all, but the sum is this:

He said that for every wrong which they had done to any one they suffered tenfold; that is to say, once in every hundred years—the thousand years answering to the hundred years which are reckoned as the life of man. If, for example, there were any who had been the cause of many deaths, or had betrayed or enslaved cities or armies, or been guilty of any other evil behavior, for each and all of these they received punishment ten times over; and the rewards of beneficence and justice and holiness were in the same proportion. I need hardly repeat what he said concerning young children dying almost as soon as they were born. Of piety and impiety to gods and parents, and of murders, there were retributions other and greater far, which he described.

He mentioned that he was present when one of the spirits asked another, "Where is Aridæus the Great?" (Now this Aridæus lived a thousand years before the time of Er. He had been the tyrant of some city of Pamphylia, and had murdered his aged father and his elder brother, and was said to have committed many other abominable crimes.) The answer was, "He comes not hither, and never will come. For this was one of the miserable sights witnessed by us: We were approaching the mouth of the cave, and, having seen all, were about to re-ascend, when of a sudden Aridæus appeared, and several others, most of whom were tyrants; and there were also, besides the tyrants, private individuals who had been great criminals. They were just at the mouth, being, as they fancied, about to return into the upper world; but the opening, instead of receiving them, gave forth a sound when any of these incurable or unpunished sinners tried to ascend;

and then wild men of fiery aspect, who were standing by, and knew what that meant, seized and carried off several of them; and Aridæus and others they bound head and hand, and threw them down, and flayed them with scourges, and dragged them along the road at the side, carding them on thorns like wool, and declaring to the passers-by what were their crimes, and that they were being taken away to be cast into hell." And of the many terrors which they had endured, he said that there was none like the terror which each of them felt at that moment lest they should hear the voice; and when there was silence, one by one they ascended with joy. "These," said Er, "were the penalties and retributions, and there were rewards as great."

Now when the spirits which were in the meadow had tarried seven days, on the eighth day they were obliged to proceed on their journey; and on the fourth day after, he said that they came to a place where they looked down from above upon a line of light like a column, extending right through the whole heaven and through the earth, in coloring resembling a rainbow, only brighter and purer. Another day's journey brought them to the place; and there, in the midst of the light they saw reaching from heaven the ends by which it is fastened. For this light is the belt of heaven, and holds together the circle of the universe, like the undergirding ropes of a trireme. From these ends is extended the spindle of Necessity, on which all the revolutions turn. . . . The spindle turns on the knees of Necessity; and on the upper surface of each of the eight circles [which are described as the orbits of the fixed stars and the planets] is a Siren who goes round with them, hymning a single sound and note. The eight together form one harmony. And round about at equal intervals, there is another band, three in number, each sitting upon her throne. These are the Fates, daughters of Necessity, who are clothed in white raiment, and have crowns of wool upon their heads—Lachesis and Clotho and Atropos—who accompany with their voices the harmonies of the sirens; Lachesis singing of the Past, Clotho of the Present, and Atropos of the Future; Clotho now and then assisting with a touch of her right hand the motion of the outer circle or whole of the spindle, and Atropos with her left hand touching the inner ones, and Lachesis laying hold of either in turn, first with one hand and then with the other.

When Er and the spirits arrived, their duty was to go at once to Lachesis. But first of all there came a Prophet who arranged them in order. Then he took from the knees of Lachesis lots and samples of life, and going up to a high place, spake as follows: "Hear the words of Lachesis, the daughter of Necessity. Mortal souls, behold a new cycle of mortal life. Your Genius will not choose you, but you will choose your Genius; and let him who draws the first lot first choose a life, which shall be his destiny. Virtue is free; and as a man honors or dishonors her, he will have more or less of her; the chooser is answerable—God is justified."

When the Interpreter had thus spoken, he scattered lots among them, and each one took up the lot which fell near him—all but Er himself (he was not allowed)—and each as he took his lot, perceived the number which he had obtained. Then the Interpreter placed on the ground before them the samples of lives; and there were many more lives than the souls present; and there were all sorts of lives—of every animal and of man in every condition.

And there were tyrannies among them, some continuing while the tyrant lived, others which broke off in the middle, and came to an end in poverty and exile and beggary. And there were lives of famous men; some who were famous for their form and beauty as well as for their strength and success in games; or, again, for their birth and the qualities of their ancestors; and some who were the reverse of famous for the opposite qualities; and of women likewise. There was not, however, any definite character in them, because the soul must of necessity be changed according to the life chosen. But there was every other quality; and they all mingled with one another, and also with elements of wealth and poverty, and disease and health. And there were mean estates also.

And here—said Socrates—is the supreme peril of our human state; and therefore the utmost care should be taken. Let each one of us leave every other kind of knowledge, and seek and follow one thing only, if peradventure he may find some one who will make him able to learn and discern between good and evil, and so to choose always and everywhere the better life as he has opportunity. . . . For we have seen and know that this is the best choice both in life and after death. A man must take with him into the world below an adamantine faith in Truth and Right, that there, too, he may be undazzled by the desire of wealth or the other allurements of evil, lest, coming upon tyrannies and similar villainies, he do irremediable wrongs to others and suffer yet worse himself. But let him know how to choose the mean, and avoid the extremes on either side, as far as possible, not only in this life, but in all that is to come. For this is the way to happiness.

And, according to the report of the messenger, this is exactly what the Prophet said at the time: "Even for the last comer, if he choose wisely, and will live diligently, there is appointed a happy and not undesirable existence. Let not him who chooses first be careless, and let not the last despair."

And while the Interpreter was speaking, he who had the first choice came forward, and in a moment chose the greatest tyranny. His mind having been darkened by folly and sensuality, he had not thought out the whole matter, and did not see at first that he was fated, among other evils, to devour his own children. But when he had time to reflect, and saw what was in the lot, he began to beat his breast and lament over his choice, not abiding by the proclamation of the Prophet; for instead of throwing the blame of his misfortune upon himself, he accused Chance and the Gods, and everything rather than himself.

Most curious, said the messenger, was the spectacle of the election—sad and laughable and strange; the souls generally choosing with a reference to their experience of a previous life. There he saw the soul which had been Orpheus choosing the life of a swan, out of enmity to the race of women, hating to be born of a woman, because they had been his murderers; he saw also the soul of Thamyris choosing the life of a nightingale; birds, on the other hand, like the swan and other musicians, choosing to be men.

The soul which obtained the twentieth lot chose the life of a lion; and this was Ajax, the son of Telamon, who would not be a man—remembering the injustice which was done him in the judgment of the arms. The next was Agamemnon, who chose the life of an eagle, because, like Ajax, he hated human nature on account of his sufferings. About the middle was the lot of Atalanta; she, seeing the great fame of an athlete, was unable to resist the temptation. After her came the soul of Epeus, the son of Panopeus, passing into the nature of a woman cunning in the arts. And, far away among the last who chose, the soul of the jester Thersites was putting on the form of a monkey.

There came also the soul of Odysseus having yet to make a choice, and his lot happened to be the last of them all. Now the recollection of his former toils had disenchanted him of ambition, and he went about for considerable time in search of a private man who had no cares. He had some difficulty in finding this, which was lying about and had been neglected by everybody else; and when he saw it, he said he would have done the same had he been first instead of last, and that he was delighted at his choice.

And not only did men pass into animals, but I must also mention that there were animals, tame and wild, who changed into one another, and into corresponding human natures—the good into gentle, and the evil into savage, in all sorts of combinations.

All the souls had now chosen their lives, and they went in the order of their choice to Lachesis, who sent with them the Genius whom they had severally chosen to be the guardian of their lives and the fulfiller of the choice. This Genius led the soul first to Clotho, who drew them within the revolution of the spindle impelled by her hand, thus ratifying the choice; and then, when they were fastened to this, carried them away to Atropos, who spun the threads and made them irreversible. Then, without turning round, they passed beneath the throne of Necessity. And when they had all passed, they marched on in a scorching heat to the plain of Forgetfulness, which was a barren waste destitute of trees and verdure; and then towards evening they encamped by the river of Unmindfulness, the water of which no vessel can hold. Of this they were all obliged to drink a certain quantity, and those who were not saved by wisdom drank more than was necessary; and each one, as he drank, forgot all things. Now after they had gone to rest, about the middle of the night, there was a thunderstorm and earthquake; and then in an instant they were driven all manner of ways, like stars shooting upwards, to their birth. Er himself was hindered from drinking the water. But in what manner or by what means he returned to the body he could not say; only in the morning, awaking suddenly, he saw himself on the pyre.

And thus—says Socrates in conclusion—the tale has been saved, and has not perished, and will save us, if we are obedient to the word spoken; and we shall pass safely over the river of Forgetfulness, and our soul will not be defiled. Wherefore, my counsel is, that we hold fast to the heavenly way, and follow after Justice and Virtue always, considering that the soul is immortal, and able to endure every sort of good and every sort of evil. Thus shall we live dear to one another and to the gods, both while remaining here and when, like conquerors in the games who go round to gather gifts, we receive our reward. And it shall be well with us both in this life and in the pilgrimage of a thousand years which we have been reciting.

PANEGYRIC OF LOVE.

THE "Symposium," or "Banquet," one of the most remarkable dialogues of Plato, illustrates the vast difference between the ancient Hellenic and the modern Christian world in regard to morality. Several prominent Athenians had met for a supper at the house of Agathon, the tragic poet, who had lately won the prize in the dramatic contest. As they were not fully recovered from the previous night's debauch, they agreed, after a few courses, to depart from the usual custom of drinking and to devote their time to the consideration of a set subject. Socrates had come in late, a little better dressed than usual, and was complimented on being the hardest-headed drinker of the company. Love was selected as the theme. Love, it must be noted, with the Greeks included chivalric devotion between men as well as mutual attraction between the opposite sexes. The ensuing discussion varies from the sublimest rhapsody to the most revolting indecency; yet there is a pervading mysticism which has attracted pious minds of other ages. After all the guests have expressed their opinions, Alcibiades bursts into the room. He is crowned with a garland, having come from another banquet. Room is made for the intoxicated intruder, who forthwith takes charge of the feast. Being informed that love has been under consideration, and asked to give his share of praise, he enters upon a long harangue, declaring his infatuation for the homely Socrates, externally like Silenus, but internally full of precious divine gifts. The self-controlled philosopher, he goes on to state, had refused to respond to his obtrusive demonstrations of affection, yet had still so mastered the speaker's will as to drive him into public affairs. The shameless profligate bears the most affectionate tribute to the virtue and power of his enchanter. Ere long the company is invaded by another band of revelers, who compel them to drink more deeply. Some slip off, others fall asleep, but at cock-crow Socrates is seen still discussing with Aristophanes about identity of tragedy and comedy. When he can get no listeners, he departs to his usual business. The following extracts are from the translation by Percy B. Shelley.

"Since then," said Eryximachus, "it is decided that no one shall be compelled to drink more than he pleases, I think that we may as well send away the flute-player to play to herself; or, if she likes, to the women within. Let us devote the present occasion to conversation between ourselves, and if you wish I will propose to you what shall be the subject of our discussion." All present desired and entreated that he would explain.

"The exordium of my speech," said Eryximachus, "will be in the style of the Menalippe of Euripides, for the story which I am about to tell belongs not to me, but to Phædrus. Phædrus has often indignantly complained to me, saying—'Is it not strange, Eryximachus, that there are innumerable hymns and pæans composed for the other gods, but that not one of the many poets who spring up in the world has ever composed a verse in honor of Love, who is such and so great a god? Nor any one of those accomplished Sophists, who, like the famous Prodicus, has celebrated the praise of Hercules and others, has ever celebrated that of Love; but what is more astonishing, I have lately met with the book of some philosopher, in which salt is extolled on account of its utility, and many other things of the same nature are in like manner celebrated with elaborate praise. That so much serious thought is expended on such trifles, and that no man has dared to this day to frame a hymn in honor of Love, who being so great a deity, is thus neglected, may well be sufficient to excite my indignation.'

"There seemed to me some justice in these complaints of Phædrus; I propose, therefore, at the same time for the sake of giving pleasure to Phædrus, and that we may on the present occasion do something well and befitting us, that this god should receive from those who are now present the honor which is most due to him. If you agree to my proposal, an excellent discussion might arise on the subject. Every one ought, according to my plan, to praise Love with as much eloquence as he can. Let Phædrus begin first, both because he reclines the first in order, and because he is the father of the discussion."

"No one will vote against you, Eryximachus," said Socrates, "for how can I oppose your proposal, who am ready to confess that I know nothing on any subject but love? Or how can Agathon, or Pausanias, or even Aristophanes, whose life is one perpetual ministration to Venus and Bacchus? Or how can any other whom I see here? Though we who sit last are scarcely on an equality with you; for if those who speak before us shall have exhausted the subject with their eloquence and reasonings, our discourses will be superfluous. But in the name of Good Fortune, let Phædrus begin and praise Love." The whole party agreed to what Socrates said. Phædrus began thus:

"Love is a mighty deity, and the object of admiration, both to gods and men, for many and for various claims; but especially on account of his origin. For that he is to be honored as one of the most ancient of the gods this may serve as a testimony, that Love has no parents, nor is there any poet or other person who has ever affirmed that there are such. Hesiod says, that first 'Chaos was produced; then the broad-bosomed Earth, to be a secure foundation for all things; then Love.' He says that after Chaos these two were produced, the Earth and Love. Parmenides, speaking of generation, says: 'But he created Love before any of the gods.' Acusilaus agrees with Hesiod. Love, therefore, is universally acknowledged to be among the oldest of things. And in addition to this, Love is the author of our greatest advantages; for

I cannot imagine a greater happiness and advantage to one who is in the flower of youth than an amiable lover, or to a lover, than an amiable object of his love. For neither birth, nor wealth, nor honors, can awaken in the minds of men the principles which should guide those who from their youth aspire to an honorable and excellent life, as Love awakens them. I speak of the fear of shame, which deters them from that which is disgraceful; and the love of glory, which incites to honorable deeds. For it is not possible that a state or private person should accomplish, without these incitements, anything beautiful or great. I assert, then, that should one who loves be discovered in any dishonorable action, or tamely enduring insult through cowardice, he would feel more anguish and shame if observed by the object of his passion than if he were observed by his father, or his companions, or any other person. In like manner, among warmly attached friends, a man is especially grieved to be discovered by his friend in any dishonorable act. If then, by any contrivance, a state or army could be composed of friends bound by strong attachment, it is beyond calculation how excellently they would administer their affairs, refraining from anything base, contending with each other for the acquirement of fame, and exhibiting such valor in battle as that, though few in numbers, they might subdue all mankind. For should one friend desert the ranks or cast away his arms in the presence of the other, he would suffer far acuter shame from that one person's regard, than from the regard of all other men. A thousand times would he prefer to die, rather than desert the object of his attachment, and not succor him in danger.

"There is none so worthless whom Love cannot impel, as it were by a divine inspiration, towards virtue, even so that he may through this inspiration become equal to one who might naturally be more excellent; and, in truth, as Homer says: 'The God breathes vigor into certain heroes'—so Love breathes into those who love, the spirit which is produced from himself. Not only men, but even women who love, are those alone who willingly expose themselves to die for others. Alcestis, the daughter of Pelias, affords to the Greeks a remarkable example of this opinion; she alone being willing to die for her husband, and so surpassing his parents in the affection with which Love inspired her towards him, as to make them appear, in the comparison with her, strangers to their own child, and related to him merely in name; and so lovely and admirable did this action appear, not only to men, but even to the gods, that, although they conceded the prerogative of bringing back the spirit from death to few among the many who then performed excellent and honorable deeds, yet, delighted with this action, they redeemed her soul from the infernal regions: so highly do the gods honor zeal and devotion in love. They sent back indeed Orpheus, the son of Œagrus, from Hell, with his purpose unfulfilled, and, showing him only the spectre of her for whom he came, refused to render up herself. For Orpheus seemed to them not as Alcestis, to have dared die for the sake of her whom he loved, and thus to secure to himself a perpetual intercourse with her in the regions to which she had preceded him, but like a cowardly musician, to have contrived to descend alive into Hell; and, indeed, they appointed as a punishment for his cowardice, that he should be put to death by women.

"Far otherwise did they reward Achilles, the son of Thetis, whom they sent to inhabit the islands of the blessed. For Achilles, though informed by his mother that his own death would ensue upon his killing Hector, but that if he refrained from it he might return home and die in old age, yet preferred revenging and honoring his beloved Patroclus, not to die for him merely, but to disdain and reject that life which he had ceased to share. Therefore the Greeks honored Achilles beyond all other men, because he thus preferred his friend to all things else.

"On this account have the gods rewarded Achilles more amply than Alcestis; permitting his spirit to inhabit the island of the blessed. Hence do I assert that Love is the most ancient and venerable of deities, and most powerful to endow mortals with the possession of happiness and virtue, both whilst they live and after they die." . . .

After others have spoken in various styles, Agathon takes up the discourse.

"All who have already spoken seem to me not so much to have praised Love, as to have felicitated mankind on the many advantages of which that deity is the cause; what he is, the author of these great benefits, none have yet declared. There is one mode alone of celebration which would comprehend the whole topic, namely, first to declare what are those benefits, and then what he is who is the author of those benefits, which are the subject of our discourse. Love ought first to be praised, and then his gifts declared. I assert, then, that although all the gods are immortally happy, Love, if I dare trust my voice to express so awful a truth, is the happiest, and most excellent, and the most beautiful. That he is the most beautiful is evident; first, O Phædrus, from this circumstance, that he is the youngest of the gods; and, secondly, from his fleetness, and from his repugnance to all that is old; for he escapes with the swiftness of wings from old age; a thing in itself sufficiently swift, since it overtakes us sooner than there is need; and which Love, who delights in the intercourse of the young, hates, and in no manner can be induced to enter into community with. The ancient proverb, which says that like is attracted by like, applies to the attributes of Love. I concede many things to you, O Phædrus, but this I do not concede, that Love is more ancient than Saturn and Jupiter. I assert that he is not only the youngest of the gods, but invested with everlasting youth. Those ancient deeds among the gods recorded by Hesiod and Parmenides, if their relations are to be considered as true, were produced not by Love, but by Necessity. For if Love had been then in Heaven, those violent and sanguinary crimes never would have taken place; but there would ever have subsisted that affection and peace in which the gods now live under the influence of Love.

"He is young, therefore, and being young is tender and soft. There were need of some poet like Homer to celebrate the delicacy and tenderness of Love. For Homer says, that the goddess Calamity is delicate, and that her feet are tender. 'Her feet are soft,' he says, 'for she treads not upon the ground, but makes her path upon the heads of men.' He gives as an evidence of her tenderness, that she walks not upon that which is hard, but that which is soft. The same evidence is sufficient to make manifest the tenderness of Love. For Love walks not upon the earth, nor over the heads of men, which are not indeed very soft; but he dwells within, and treads on the softest of existing things, having established his habitation within the souls and inmost nature of gods and men; not indeed in all souls—for wherever he chances to find a hard and rugged disposition, there he will not inhabit, but only where it is most soft and tender. Of needs must he be the most delicate of all things, who touches lightly with his feet only the softest parts of those things which are the softest of all.

"He is then the youngest and the most delicate of all divinities; and in addition to this, he is, as it were, the most moist and liquid. For if he were otherwise, he could not, as he does, fold himself around everything, and secretly flow out and into every soul. His loveliness, that which Love possesses far beyond all other things, is a manifestation of the liquid and flowing symmetry of his form; for between deformity and Love there is eternal contrast and repugnance. His life is spent among flowers, and this accounts for the immortal fairness of his skin; for the winged Love rests not in his flight on any form, or within any soul, the flower of whose loveliness is faded, but there remains most willingly where is the odor and the radiance of blossoms, yet unwithered. Concerning the beauty of the god, let this be sufficient, though many things must remain unsaid. Let us next consider the virtue and power of Love.

"What is most admirable in Love is, that he neither inflicts nor endures injury in his relations either with gods or men. Nor if he suffers anything does he suffer it through violence, nor in doing anything does he act with violence, for Love is never even touched with violence. Every one willingly administers every thing to Love; and that which every one voluntarily concedes to another, the laws, which are the kings of the republic, decree that is just for him to possess. In addition to justice, Love participates in the highest temperance; for if temperance is defined to be the being superior to and holding under dominion pleasures and desires, then Love, than whom no pleasure is more powerful, and who is thus more powerful than all persuasions and delights, must be excellently temperate. In power and valor Mars cannot contend with Love: the love of Venus possesses Mars; the possessor is always superior to the possessed, and he who subdues the most powerful must of necessity be the most powerful of all.

"The justice and temperance and valor of the god have been thus declared;—there remains to exhibit his wisdom. And first, that, like Eryximachus, I may honor my own profession, the god is a wise poet; so wise that he can even make a poet one who was not before: for every one, even if before he were ever so undisciplined, becomes a poet as soon as he is touched by Love;—a sufficient proof that Love is a great poet, and well skilled in that science according to the discipline of music. For what any one possesses not, or knows not, that can he neither give nor teach another. And who will deny that the divine poetry, by which all living things are produced upon the earth, is harmonized by the wisdom of Love? Is it not evident that Love was the author of all the arts of life with which we are acquainted, and that he whose teacher has been Love, becomes eminent and illustrious, whilst he who knows not Love, remains forever unregarded and obscure? Apollo invented medicine, and divination, and archery, under the guidance of desire and Love; so that Apollo was the disciple of Love. Through him the Muses discovered the arts of literature, and Vulcan that of moulding brass, and Minerva the loom, and Jupiter the mystery of the dominion which he now exercises over gods and men. So were the gods taught and disciplined by the love of that which is beautiful; for there is no love towards deformity.

"At the origin of things, as I have before said, many fearful deeds are reported to have been done among the gods, on account of the dominion of Necessity. But so soon as this deity sprang forth from the desire which forever tends in the universe towards that which is lovely, then all blessings descended upon all living things, human and divine. Love seems to me, O Phædrus, a divinity the most beautiful and the best of all, and the author to all others of the excellencies with which his own nature is endowed. Nor can I restrain the poetic enthusiasm which takes possession of my discourse and bids me declare that Love is the divinity who creates peace among men, and calm upon the sea, the windless silence of storms, repose and sleep in sadness. Love divests us of all alienation from each other, and fills our vacant hearts with overflowing sympathy; he gathers us together in such social meetings as we now delight to celebrate, our guardian and our guide in dances, and sacrifices, and feasts. Yes, Love, who showers benignity upon the world, and before whose presence all harsh passions flee and perish; the author of all soft affections; the destroyer of all ungentle thoughts; merciful, mild; the object of the admiration of the wise, and the delight of gods; possessed by the fortunate, and desired by the unhappy, therefore unhappy because they possess him not; the father of grace, and delicacy, and gentleness, and delight, and persuasion, and desire; the cherisher of all that is good, the abolisher of all evil; our most excellent pilot, defence, saviour and guardian, in labor and in fear, in desire and in reason; the ornament and governor of all things, human and divine; the best, the loveliest; in whose footsteps every one ought to follow, celebrating him excellently in song, and bearing each his part in that divinest harmony which Love sings to all things which live and are, soothing the troubled minds of gods and men. This, O Phædrus, is what I have to offer in praise of the divinity; partly composed, indeed, of thoughtless and playful fancies, and partly of such serious ones, as I could well command."

No sooner had Agathon ceased, than a loud murmur of applause arose from all present; so becomingly had the fair youth spoken, both in praise of the god, and in extenuation of himself.

THE LAWYER AND THE PHILOSOPHER.

(From the dialogue called "Theætetus," translated by Prof. B. Jowett.)

Socrates. Your remark recalls to my mind an observation which I have often made, that those who have passed their days in the pursuit of philosophy are ridiculously at fault when they have to appear and plead in court. How natural is this!

Theodorus. What do you mean?

Soc. I mean to say, that those who from their youth upwards have been knocking about in the courts and such like places, compared with those who have received a philosophical education, are slaves, and the others are freemen.

Theod. In what is the difference seen?

Soc. In the leisure of which you were speaking, and which a freeman can always command; he has his talk out in peace, and, like ourselves, wanders at will from one subject to another, and from a second to a third, if his fancy prefers a new one, caring not whether his words are many or few; his only aim is to attain the truth. But the lawyer is always in a hurry; there is the water of the clepsydra driving him on, and not allowing him to expatiate at will; and there is his adversary standing over him, enforcing his rights; the affidavit, which in their phraseology is termed the brief, is recited; and from this he must not deviate. He is a servant, and is disputing about a fellow-servant before his master, who is seated, and has the cause in his hands; the trial is never about some indifferent matter, but always concerns himself; and often he has to run for his life. The consequence has been, that he has become keen and shrewd; he has learned how to flatter his master in word and indulge him in deed; but his soul is small and unrighteous. His slavish condition has deprived him of growth and uprightness and independence; dangers and fears, which were too much for his truth and honesty, came upon him in early years, when the tenderness of youth was unequal to them, and he has been driven into crooked ways; from the first he has practiced deception and retaliation, and has become stunted and warped. And so he has passed out of youth into manhood, having no soundness in him; and is now, as he thinks, a master in wisdom. Such is the lawyer, Theodorus. Will you have the companion picture of the philosopher, who is of our brotherhood; or shall we return to the argument? Do not let us abuse the freedom of digression which we claim.

Theod. Nay, Socrates, let us finish what we were about; for you truly said that we belong to a brotherhood which is free, and are not the servants of the argument; but the argument is our servant, and must wait our leisure. Where is the judge or spectator who has a right to censure or control us, as he might the poets?

Soc. Then, as this is your wish, I will describe the leaders; for there is no use in talking about the inferior sort. In the first place, the lords of philosophy have never, from their youth upwards, known their way to the Agora, or the dicastery, or the council, or any other political assembly; they neither see nor hear the laws or votes of the state written or spoken; the eagerness of political societies in the attainment of offices—clubs, and banquets, and revels, and singing-maidens, do not enter even into their dreams. Whether any event has turned out well or ill in the city, what disgrace may have descended to any one from his ancestors, male or female, are matters of which the philosopher no more knows than he can tell, as they say, how many pints are contained in the ocean. Neither is he conscious of his ignorance. For he does not hold aloof in order that he may gain a reputation; but the truth is, that the outer form of him only is in the city; his mind, disdaining the littlenesses and nothingnesses of human things, is "flying all abroad," as Pindar says, measuring with line and rule the things which are under and on the earth and above the heaven, interrogating the whole nature of each and all, but not condescending to anything which is within reach.

Theod. What do you mean, Socrates?

Soc. I will illustrate my meaning, Theodorus, by the jest which the clever, witty Thracian handmaid made about Thales, when he fell into a well as he was looking up at the stars. She said, that he was so eager to know what was going on in heaven, that he could not see what was before his feet. This is a jest which is equally applicable to all philosophers. For the philosopher is wholly unacquainted with his next-door neighbor; he is ignorant, not only of what he is doing, but whether he is or is not a human creature; he is searching into the essence of man, and is unwearied in discovering what belongs to such a nature to do or suffer different from any other;—I think that you understand me, Theodorus?

Theod. I do, and what you say is true.

Soc. And thus, my friend, on every occasion, private as well as public, as I said at first, when he appears in a law-court, or in any place in which he has to speak of things which are at his feet and before his eyes, he is the jest, not only of Thracian handmaids, but of the general herd, tumbling into wells and every sort of disaster through his inexperience. He looks such an awkward creature, and conveys the impression that he is stupid. When he is reviled, he has nothing personal to say in answer to the civilities of his adversaries, for he knows no scandals of any one, and they do not interest him; and therefore he is laughed at for his sheepishness; and when others are being praised and glorified, he cannot help laughing very sincerely in the simplicity of his heart; and this again makes him look like a fool. When he hears a tyrant or king eulogized, he fancies that he is listening to the praises of some keeper of cattle—a swineherd, or shepherd, or cowherd, who is being praised for the quantity of milk which he squeezes from them; and he remarks that the creature whom they tend, and out of whom they squeeze the wealth, is of a less tractable and more insidious nature. Then, again, he observes that the great man is of necessity as ill-mannered and uneducated as any shepherd—for he has no leisure, and he is surrounded by a wall, which is his mountain-pen. Hearing of enormous landed proprietors of ten thousand acres and more, our philosopher deems this to be a trifle, because he has been accustomed to think of the whole earth; and when they sing the praises of family, and say that some one is a gentleman because he has had seven generations of wealthy ancestors, he thinks that their sentiments only betray the dulness and narrowness of vision of those who utter them, and who are not educated enough to look at the whole, nor to consider that every man has had thousands and thousands of progenitors, and among them have been rich and poor, kings and slaves, Hellenes and barbarians, many times over. And when some one boasts of a catalogue of twenty-five ancestors, and goes back to Heracles, the son of Amphitryon, he cannot understand his poverty of ideas. Why is he unable to calculate that Amphitryon had a twenty-fifth ancestor, who might have been anybody, and was such as Fortune made him, and he had a fiftieth, and so on? He is amused at the notion that he cannot do a sum, and thinks that a little arithmetic would have got rid of his senseless vanity. Now, in all these cases our philosopher is derided by the vulgar, partly because he is above them, and also because he is ignorant of what is before him, and always at a loss.

Theod. That is very true, Socrates.

Soc. But, O my friend, when he draws the other into upper air, and gets him out of his pleas and rejoinders into the contemplation of justice and injustice in their own nature and in their difference from one another and from all other things; or from the common places about the happiness of kings to the consideration of government, and of human happiness and misery in general—what they are, and how a man should seek after the one and avoid the other—when that narrow, keen, little legal mind is called to account about all this, he gives the philosopher his revenge; for dizzied by the height at which he is hanging, and from which he looks into space, which is a strange experience to him, he, being dismayed, and lost, and stammering out broken words, is laughed at, not by Thracian handmaidens or any other uneducated persons, for they have no eye for the situation, but by every man who has not been brought up as a slave. Such are the two characters, Theodorus: the one of the philosopher or gentleman, who may be excused for appearing simple and useless when he has to perform some menial office, such as packing up a bag, or flavoring a sauce or fawning speech; the other, of the man who is able to do every kind of service smartly and neatly, but knows not how to wear his cloak like a gentleman; still less does he acquire the music of speech, or hymn the true life which is lived by immortals or men blessed of heaven.

THE FAREWELL OF SOCRATES.

(From the "Phædon," translated by Professor B. Jowett.)

SOCRATES was permitted to receive his friends in prison during the interval between his condemnation and death. He discoursed with them on the immortality of the soul, and gave his views of its future abode.

Wherefore, Simmias, seeing all these things, what ought not we to do in order to obtain virtue and wisdom in this life? Fair is the prize, and the hope great!

I do not mean to affirm that the description which I have given of the soul and her mansions is exactly true—a man of sense ought hardly to say that. But I do say that, inasmuch as the soul is shown to be immortal, he may venture to think, not improperly or unworthily, that something of the kind is true. The venture is a glorious one, and he ought to comfort himself with words like these, which is the reason why I lengthen out the tale. Wherefore, I say, let a man be of good cheer about his soul, who has cast away the pleasures and ornaments of the body as alien to him, and rather hurtful in their effects, and has followed after the pleasures of knowledge in this life; who has adorned the soul in her own proper jewels; which are temperance, and justice, and courage, and nobility and truth—in these arrayed, she is ready to go on her journey to the world below, when her time comes. You, Simmias, and Cebes, and all other men, will depart at some time or other. Me already, as the tragic poet would say, the voice of fate calls. Soon I must drink the poison; and I think that I had better repair to the bath first, in order that the women may not have the trouble of washing my body after I am dead.

When he had done speaking, Crito said: And have you any commands for us, Socrates—anything to say about your children; or any other matter in which we can serve you?

Nothing particular, he said: only, as I have always told you, I would have you look to yourselves; that is a service which you may always be doing to me or mine as well as to yourselves. And you need not make professions; for if you take no thought for yourselves, and walk not according to the precepts which I have given you, not now for the first time, the warmth of your professions will be of no avail.

We will do our best, said Crito. But in what way would you have us bury you?

In any way that you like; only you must get hold of me, and take care that I do not walk away from you. Then he turned to us, and added, with a smile: I cannot make Crito believe that I am the same Socrates who have been talking and conducting the argument; he fancies that I am the other Socrates whom he will soon see, a dead body—and he asks, How shall he bury me? And though I have spoken many words in the endeavor to show that when I have drunk the poison I shall leave you and go to the joys of the blessed,—these words of mine, with which I comforted you and myself, have had, as I perceive, no effect upon Crito. And therefore I want you to be surety for me now, as he was surety for me at the trial: but let the promise be of another sort; for he was my surety to the judges that I would remain, but you must be my surety to him that I shall not remain, but go away and depart; and then he will suffer less at my death, and not be grieved when he sees my body being burned or buried. I would not have him sorrow at my hard lot, or say at the burial, Thus we lay out Socrates; or, Thus we follow him to the grave or bury him; for false words are not only evil in themselves, but they infect the soul with evil. Be of good cheer then, my good Crito, and say that you are burying my body only; and do with that as is usual, and as you think best.

When he had spoken these words he arose and went into the bath-chamber with Crito, who bid us wait; and we waited, talking and thinking of the subject of discourse, and also of the greatness of our sorrow; he was like a father of whom we were being bereaved, and we were about to pass the rest of our lives as orphans. When he had taken the bath, his children were brought to him (he had two young sons and an elder one); and the women of his family also came, and he talked to them and gave them a few directions in the presence of Crito, and he then dismissed them and returned to us.

Now the hour of sunset was near, for a good deal of time had passed while he was within. When he came out he sat down again with us after his bath, but not much was said. Soon the jailer, who was the servant of the Eleven,* entered and stood by him, saying: To you, Socrates, whom I know to be the noblest and gentlest and best of all who ever came to this place, I will not impute the angry feelings of other men, who rage and swear at me, when in obedience to the authorities, I bid them drink the poison—indeed I am sure that you will not be angry with me, for others, as you are aware, and not I, are the guilty cause. And so fare you well, and try to bear lightly what must needs be; you know my errand. Then bursting into tears, he turned away and went out.

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* The chief magistrates of Athens at that time.

Socrates looked at him and said: I return your good wishes, and will do as you bid. Then turning to us he said, How charming the man is: since I have been in prison he has always been coming to see me, and at times he would talk to me, and was as good as could be to me, and now see how generously he sorrows for me. But we must do as he says, Crito; let the cup be brought, if the poison is prepared; if not, let the attendant prepare some.

ARISTOTLE.

GOETHE, when nearing the end of his life, said, "If I had youthful faculties at my command, I should devote myself to Greek. . . . Nature and Aristotle should be my whole study. It is beyond all conception what that man espied, saw, beheld, remarked, observed." Not only was Aristotle the most learned man of antiquity, but he inaugurated the era of learning in Greece, which was later extended to Rome. Towards the close of the Dark Ages his long-lost writings were recovered, and became the foundation of Christian philosophy. He still guides and directs the intellects of millions who know not his name.

Aristotle was born at Stagira, in Thrace, in 384 B.C., his father being the physician of King Amyntas of Macedonia. Early left an orphan, he went in his eighteenth year to Athens to become the disciple of Plato. For twenty years he remained with that noble master, who used to call him the Intellect of his school. At the age of forty Aristotle, already renowned for the universality of his attainments, was invited by the ambitious Philip of Macedon to take charge of the education of Alexander, then thirteen years old. Thus were the greatest thinker and the destined conqueror of the ancient world brought into most intimate relations with profit to both. Three years later the pupil became regent of the kingdom. Aristotle returned to Athens in 335 B.C., and opened his school in the Lyceum, a gymnasium connected with a temple of Apollo. Here, walking up and down the shady avenues, he delivered his carefully prepared lectures, the outlines of which form some of his extant works. The Socratic dialogue, which had been the chosen and appropriate vehicle of Plato's instruction, gave way to a continuous, systematic treatment of all the departments of knowledge. Though other philosophers attended Alexander in his career of conquest, the high-minded master remained at Athens; yet he was liberally assisted by his royal pupil in obtaining new information from the distant East. When the young monarch, elated with his swift success, began to adopt Oriental habits repugnant to Hellenic traditions, there seems to have arisen a coldness between the philosopher and the conqueror. Yet when the news of Alexander's death reached Athens, the sudden popular reaction against everything that savored of Macedonia obliged the great teacher to leave the city. He said he wished to prevent the Athenians sinning against philosophy a second time. He retired to Chalcis, in Eubœa, where he died in 322 B.C.

However great the fame of Aristotle, and however profound his influence on the intellectual development of man, his writings hardly belong to literature proper. They are strictly professorial, devoid of ornament, and necessarily dry. This rigid, but comprehensive, thinker has enriched all sciences by original investigations. He is admired for width and solidity of research, for definition of the modes of thought, for precision in the use of technical terms. He may therefore be regarded as the great explorer, surveyor, and cartographer of the human mind and the whole province of thought. But as a writer he cannot—like his own master, Plato—inspire his readers with enthusiasm, nor stimulate the imagination, nor rouse the latent energies of the soul. Yet he has been pronounced by an eminent scientific writer (G. J. Romanes), "not only the greatest figure in antiquity, but the greatest intellect that has ever appeared upon the face of the earth."

The very titles under which his various writings are usually comprised—"Organon," "Physics," "Metaphysics," "Ethics," "Politics," "Economics," "Poetics," and "Rhetoric"—exhibit the extent of his intellectual empire. Besides the foregoing there has recently been brought to light a treatise on "The Constitution of Athens."

CONSIDERATIONS ON THE STATE.

It is evident that a state is not a mere community of place; nor is it established that men may be safe from injury, and maintain an interchange of good offices. All these things, indeed, must take place where there is a state, and yet they may all exist and there be no state. A state, then, may be defined to be a society of people joining together with their families and children to live happily, enjoying a life of thorough independence. . . .

In every state the people are divided into three kinds: the very rich, the very poor, and, thirdly, those who are between them. Since, then, it is universally acknowledged that the mean is best, it is evident that even in respect to fortune, a middle state is to be preferred; for that state is most likely to submit to reason. For those who are very handsome, or very strong, or very noble, or, on the other hand, those who are very poor, or very weak, or very mean, are with difficulty induced to obey reason. And this because the one class is supercilious, and "sin as it were with a cart-rope," the other rascally and mean; and the crimes of each arise respectively from insolence and villany. . . .

It is evident that the most perfect political community is that which is administered by the middle classes, and that those states are best carried on in which these are the majority and outweigh both the other classes; and if that cannot be, at least when they overbalance each separate. For, being thrown into the balance, it will prevent either excess from predominating. Wherefore it is the greatest happiness to possess a moderate and competent fortune; since, where some possess too much, and others nothing at all, the government must be either an extreme democracy or else a pure oligarchy, or, from the excesses of both, a tyranny; for this springs from a headstrong democracy or oligarchy, but far more seldom when the members of the community are nearly on an equality with each other. . . .

It is clear that the state where the middle ranks predominate is the best, for it alone is free from seditious movements. Where such a state is large, there are fewer seditions and insurrections to disturb the peace; and for this reason extensive states are more peaceful internally, as the middle ranks are numerous. In small states it is easy to pass to the two extremes, so as to have scarcely any middle ranks remaining; but all are either very poor or very rich. . . .

The supreme power must necessarily be in the hands of one person, or of a few, or of the many. When the one, the few, or the many direct their whole efforts for the common good, such states must be well governed; but when the advantage of the one, the few, or the many is alone regarded, a change for the worse must be expected. . . .

A pretension to offices of state ought to be founded on those qualifications, which are part of itself. And for this reason, men of birth, independence, and fortune are right in contending with each other for office; for those who hold offices of state ought to be persons of independence and property. A state should no more consist entirely of poor men than it ought entirely of slaves. But though such persons are requisite, it is evident that there must also be justice and military valor, for without justice and valor no state can be maintained; just as without the former class a state cannot exist, and without the latter it cannot be well governed.

The free-born and men of high birth will dispute the point with each other as being nearly on an equality; for citizens that are well-born have a right to more respect than the ignoble. Honorable descent is in all nations greatly esteemed; besides, it is to be expected that the children of men of worth will be like their fathers, for nobility is the virtue of a family.

There are three qualifications which ought to be possessed by a man who aspires to fill the high offices of state; first, he must be well disposed, and prepared to support the established constitution of his country; next, he ought to have a special aptitude for the office which he fills; and, thirdly, he should have the kind of virtue and love of justice which suits the particular state in which he lives. . . .

In states that are well blended particular care ought, above all things, to be taken that nothing be done contrary to law; and this should be chiefly looked to in matters of small moment: for small violations of law advance by stealthy steps, in the same way as, in a domestic establishment, trifling expenses, if often repeated, consume a man's whole estate.

For there is no free state where the laws do not rule supreme; for the law ought to be above all. . . .

Democracies are chiefly subject to revolutions from the dishonest conduct of demagogues. For partly by lodging informations against men of property, and partly by rousing the common people against them, they induce them to unite; for a common fear will make the greatest enemies to join together.

When a democracy is controlled by fixed laws, a demagogue has no power, but the best citizens fill the offices of state: when the laws are not supreme, there demagogues are found. For the people act like a king, being one body; for the many are supreme, not as individuals, but as a whole.

The worst form of democracy is where every citizen has a share in the administration: few states can endure such a form, nor can it exist for any length of time unless it is well supported by laws and purity of manners. . . .

The only stable state is that where every one possesses an equality in the eye of the law, according to his merit, and enjoys his own unmolested.

THE TYRANT.

THE defection of monarchy is tyranny; for both are monarchies, but the difference between them is very marked: for a tyrant thinks only of his own interests, while a king attends to those of his subjects. For he is not a king who is not uncontrolled, and who is not possessed of all kinds of goods, for such a one stands in need of nothing more; therefore he does not require to be looking after his own interests, but devotes himself to his subjects.

A tyrant pursues his own peculiar good, and it is more manifest for this very reason, that tyranny is the worst form of government, for that is worst which is opposite to the best.

TO VIRTUE.

HERMIAS, who was originally a slave, studied under Plato, and won the friendship of Aristotle. The latter, after Plato's death, went to the court of his friend, who was then lord or tyrant of Atarna. After the death of Hermias, Aristotle married his niece. The following tribute to his friend testifies the philosopher's poetic power as well as his affection.

O SOUGHT with toil and mortal strife,
  By those of human birth,
Virtue, thou noblest end of life,
  Thou goodliest gain on earth!
Thee, Maid, to win, our youth would bear,
Unwearied, fiery pains; and dare
  Death for thy beauty's worth;
So bright thy proffered honors shine,
Like clusters of a fruit divine.

Sweeter than slumber's boasted joys,
  And more desired than gold,
Dearer than nature's dearest ties;
  For thee those heroes old,
Herculean son of highest Jove,
And the twin birth of Leda, strove
  By perils manifold:
Great Peleus' son, with like desire,
And Ajax sought the Stygian fire.

The bard shall crown with lasting lay,
  And aye immortal make
Atarna's sovereign, 'reft of day
  For thy dear beauty's sake:
Him, therefore, the recording Nine
In songs extol to heights divine,
  And every chord awake;
Promoting still, with reverence due,
The meed of Friendship tried and true.

LATIN LITERATURE.

PERIOD IV. A.D. 25–100.

THE SILVER AGE.

IN Rome the period following the death of Augustus was unfavorable to the exercise of genius or the cultivation of talent. Hitherto the study of literature had been pursued with an ardor almost unnatural. Every Greek author of eminence had been imitated; and just when a sense of literary greatness had taken possession of the Roman people, Augustus was politic enough to become the patron of letters. He was thus able to divert men's minds from speculating on political changes and to employ their talents usefully. Such patronage was a powerful stimulus to literary exertion; but when that was withdrawn, and Greek resources failed, inventive faculty was wanting, and the lassitude ensuing from excessive enthusiasm fell on prose and poetry alike. National vices had benumbed imaginative power and taste for true art. The victories of Lucullus and later conquerors in Asia had opened the way for the introduction of Eastern luxuries, and with these came vices which Augustus had tried, but failed to suppress. The gloomy Tiberius, though a learned man, was not a patron of literature. Yet the influence of the Greek teachers continued to affect the minds of the Romans. There was a curious temporary revival of interest in literature under Nero, when the emperor himself was ambitious of fame as a poet and artist. But in the close atmosphere of tyranny higher literature was stifled.

Under the milder reign of the Flavian emperors it again revived and produced new fruit.

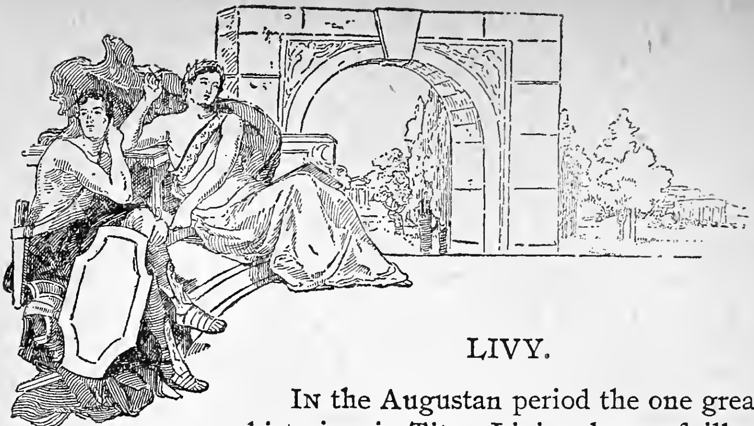
Taken as a whole, the Silver Age is characterized by tyrannical imperialism, a literature disfigured by rhetorical flourish, affectation of learning and dogmatic philosophy, yet its demerits are redeemed by the excellence of a few noble characters and the admirable genius of a few writers.

In the earlier part of the Silver Age the chief writers were the dull epicist Silius Italicus, the fabulist Phædrus and the youthful satirist Persius, who was cut off prematurely. Of the time of Nero the stoic moralist Seneca and his nephew the republican poet Lucan are the chief representatives; but Petronius, the minister of his pleasures, has a unique fame. In the reigns of Titus and Domitian the epigrammatist Martial found abundant themes for his sprightly wit. Statius, who was patronized and afterwards stabbed by Domitian, wrote two epics, the "Thebaid" and the "Achilleid," and some short pieces called "Silvæ," the Woods. Valerius Flaccus wrote an epic on the Argonauts, in imitation of Apollonius Rhodius. Sulpitia, the only Roman poetess whose verse survives, belonged to Domitian's reign; as also did Quintilian, the author of the famous "Institutes of Oratory." At this time also the Elder Pliny made his wonderful collections of facts and absurdities, which he enshrined in his "Natural History." Other writers, belonging to science rather than literature, are Vitruvius, the architect, and Pomponius Mela, the geographer. Columella had some success in versifying agriculture, and Manilius did the same for astronomy. Towards the close of the Silver Age came the most famous of its writers—Juvenal, the fierce and masterly satirist; Tacitus, the greatest of Latin historians, and his friend, Pliny the Younger, the genial letter-writer.

Historians occupy the most prominent place among the prose writers of the Silver Age. Titus Livius, the most copious of the Roman historians, wrote under the first emperor, but is treated here. In the last days of the Republic the old annalists had fallen into neglect, but Sallust and Cæsar had shown how events could be narrated with literary charm. Yet while the fires of the Civil Wars were still smouldering in their ashes, danger attached to the attempt to portray too vividly the struggles of the great leaders. Even under the pacific policy of Augustus, it was safer to recite the remote beginnings of Rome's greatness or its conflict with Hannibal, and both Virgil in his epic and Livy in his history employed their genius in refreshing the memories and stimulating the patriotism of their own generation, by recalling the deeds of the ancestral heroes. Livy's "History of Rome" comprised altogether 142 books, but only a few decades have reached modern readers. He told the story of Rome according to Roman belief—the early legends in their picturesque form, as long preserved and embellished by oral tradition, the later narratives in more sober dress, as recorded by contemporary witnesses, or related in funeral orations, which were a prominent feature in the institutions of the city. His monumental work is still a great storehouse of Roman character and incident from which treasures have been drawn for modern literature. Livy's sympathies were with the heroes of the early republic, while he recognized the imperial tendencies in the later conquerors of the world.

The next great historian belongs to a later generation. The empire had been firmly established, and had already manifested its evil effects upon Roman character when Tacitus undertook to tell its history. Favored by the accession of virtuous emperors to the throne, he was enabled to give the truth about their vicious predecessors. Testimony from all sides proves that the colors in which he has painted their characters are not too dark and repulsive. In contrast with these he had the opportunity to portray men of excellent virtue, among whom he was especially delighted to place his father-in-law Agricola.

Between the two great historians came several of lower rank, yet of real merit. Of these may be mentioned Suetonius, the writer of the gossipy "Lives of the Twelve Cæsars;" Velleius Paterculus, who wrote a brief but excellent "History of Rome;" Quintus Curtius, the biographer of Alexander the Great; Cornelius Nepos, who treated in short sketches the most illustrious Greeks and Romans; and Valerius Maximus, who compiled "Remarkable Deeds and Sayings."



LIVY.

In the Augustan period the one great historian is Titus Livius, born of illustrious parentage at Padua, B.C. 69. On his removal to Rome he came under the favorable notice of Augustus. The great work by which he is known to posterity is the "History of Rome" from the time of Æneas to the death of Drusus, in 9 A.D. The whole history consisted originally of 142 Books, of which only thirty-five have been transmitted to us—the first ten and Books XXI. to XLV. inclusive.

Livy charms us by his romantic narrative, his lucid style, and his matchless descriptions. He desires to be truthful, and never falsifies intentionally, but he shrinks from telling the whole truth. Patriotism, or pride of race, prompts him to make more of a Roman victory than a Roman defeat. And this desire to celebrate the triumphs and the military glory of Rome occasions some strange inconsistencies.

Livy's ideal of social and political life is in the past, and he loves to call up the glories of the republic, and bring them back to life. He sometimes laments the loss of modesty, simplicity, loftiness of mind, and especially the piety of bygone days. The Rome of Cincinnatus and Fabius Cunctator is his ideal, and in his unhesitating patriotism he crowns the "Eternal City" with glory, and overwhelms her foes with ignominy. Livy accepts the narratives of his predecessors, and contents himself with improving upon their style. This he accomplishes with eminent success, and never loses his charm as a narrator. No one could have been better fitted than Livy to be the favorite historian of the Augustan period. It was a time of peace and self-complacency, luxurious ease, and the refined pleasures of advanced civilization, when praise was more acceptable than criticism. He was eminently a rhetorician, and he finds an outlet for his rhetorical learning in the speeches which he puts into the mouths of his chief characters. Yet thus he often gives a faithful picture of the person under review, but he is not careful to avoid sameness in the style of his speeches, nor to adapt them to the speakers. Livy believed in the republic and government by the "optimates," or "best men,"—the aristocracy.

Livy died the same year as Ovid, 17 A.D., and was buried in his native city, where a mausoleum was raised to him in the middle of the sixteenth century.

BRUTUS AND HIS SONS.

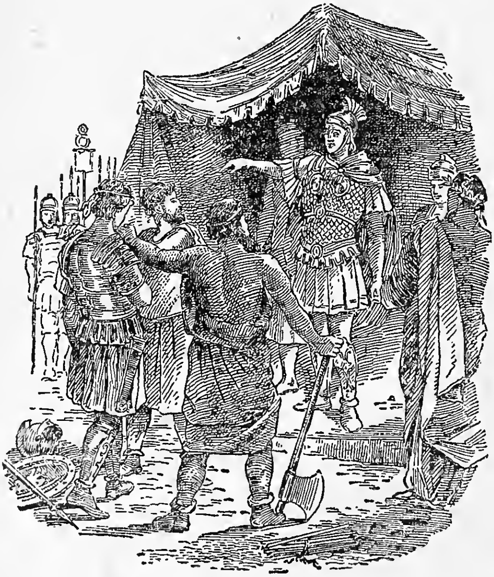
LUCIUS JUNIUS BRUTUS, who had freed Rome from the tyranny of the Tarquins in 510 B.C., was made one of the first consuls. His administration was embarrassed by attempts to restore the kings. The chief attempt is here reported.

THOUGH nobody doubted that a war was impending from the Tarquins, yet it broke out later than was universally expected; but liberty was well nigh lost by treachery and fraud, a thing they had never apprehended. There were, among the Roman youth, several young men of noble families, who, during the regal government, had pursued their pleasures without any restraint; being of the same age with, and companions of, the young Tarquins, and accustomed to live in princely style. Longing for that licentiousness, now that the privileges of all were equalized, they complained that the liberty of others had been converted to their slavery: "that a king was a human being, from whom you could obtain what may be necessary; that there was room for favor and for kindness; that he could be angry, and could forgive; that he knew the difference between a friend and an enemy; that laws were a deaf, inexorable thing, more beneficial and advantageous for the poor than the rich; that they allowed of no relaxation or indulgence, if you transgress bounds; that it was perilous, amid so many human errors, to live solely by one's integrity." Whilst their minds were already thus discontented, ambassadors from the royal family came unexpectedly, demanding restitution of their effects merely, without any mention of return. After their application was heard in the senate, the deliberation on it lasted for several days, fearing lest the non-restitution might be a pretext for war, and the restitution a fund and assistance for war. In the meantime the ambassadors were planning different schemes; openly demanding the property, they secretly concerted measures for recovering the throne, and soliciting persons as if for the object which appeared to be under consideration, they sound their feelings; to those by whom their proposals were favorably received they give letters from the Tarquins, and confer with them about admitting the royal family into the city secretly by night.

The matter was first intrusted to brothers named Vitellii and those named Aquilii. A sister of the Vitellii had been married to Brutus the consul, and the issue of that marriage were young men, Titus and Tiberius; these their uncles admitted into a participation of the plot: several young noblemen also were taken in as associates, the memory of whose names has been lost from distance of time. In the meantime, when that opinion had prevailed in the senate, which recommended the giving back of the property, and the ambassadors made use of this as a pretext for delay in the city, because they had obtained from the consuls time to procure modes of conveyance, by which they might convey away the effects of the royal family; all this time they spend in consulting with the conspirators, and by pressing they succeed in having letters given to them for the Tarquins. For otherwise how were they to believe that the accounts brought by the ambassadors on matters of such importance were not idle? The letters, given to be a pledge of their sincerity, disclosed the plot; for when, the day before the ambassadors set out to the Tarquins, they had supped by chance at the house of the Vitellii, and the conspirators there in private discoursed much together concerning their new design, one of the slaves, who had already perceived what was going on, overheard their conversation; but waited for the occasion when the letters should be given to the ambassadors, the detection of which would prove the transaction; when he perceived that they were given, he laid the whole affair before the consuls. The consuls, having left their home to seize the ambassadors and conspirators, crushed the whole affair without any tumult; particular care being taken of the letters, lest they should escape them. The traitors being immediately thrown into chains, but doubt arose respecting the ambassadors, and though they deserved to be considered as enemies, the law of nations prevailed.

The question concerning the restitution of the tyrants' effects, which the senate had formerly voted, came again under consideration. The Fathers, fired with indignation, expressly forbade them either to be restored or confiscated. They were given to be rifled by the people, that after being made participators in the royal plunder, they might lose forever all hopes of a reconciliation with the Tarquins. A field belonging to them, which lay between the city and the Tiber, having been consecrated to Mars, has been called the Campus Martius. It happened that there was a crop of corn upon it ready to be cut down, which produce of the field, as they thought it unlawful to use, after it was reaped, a great number of men carried the corn and straw in baskets, and threw them into the Tiber, which then flowed with shallow water, as is usual in the heat of summer; that thus the heaps of corn as it stuck in the shallows became settled when covered over with mud; by these and the afflux of other things, which the river happened to bring thither, an island was formed by degrees. Afterwards mounds were added, and aid was afforded by art, that a surface so well raised might be firm enough for sustaining temples and porticoes.

After plundering the tyrants' effects, the traitors were condemned and capital punishment inflicted. Their punishment was the more remarkable, because the consulship imposed on the father the office of punishing his own children, and the one who should have been removed as a spectator, Fortune assigned as the person to exact the punishment. Young men of the highest quality stood tied to a stake; but the consul's sons attracted the eyes of all the spectators from the rest of the criminals, as from persons unknown; nor did the people pity them more on account of the severity of the punishment, than the horrid crime by which they had deserved it. "That they, in that year particularly, should have brought themselves to betray into the hands of Tarquin, formerly a proud tyrant, and now an exasperated exile, their country just delivered, their father its deliverer, the consulate which took its rise from the family of the Junii, the Fathers, the people, and whatever belonged either to the gods or the citizens of Rome." The consuls seated themselves in their tribunal, and the lictors, being despatched to inflict punishment, strip them naked, beat them with rods, and strike off their heads. During all this time, the father's looks and countenance presented a touching spectacle, his natural feelings bursting forth occasionally during the office of superintending the public execution. Next after the punishment of the guilty, that there might be a striking example in either way for the prevention of crime, a sum of money was granted out of the treasury as a reward to the informer; liberty also and the rights of citizenship were granted him.



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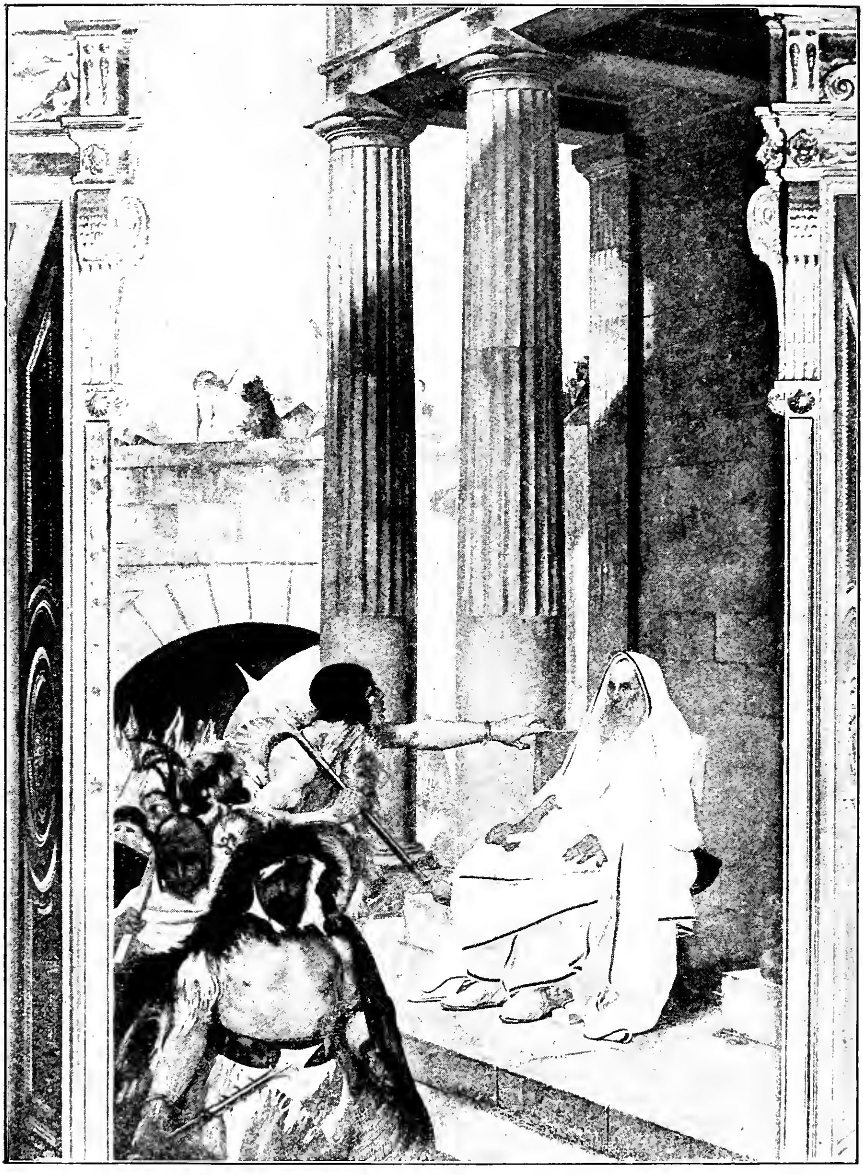


C. MACCARI, PINX

PAPIRIUS INSULTED BY THE GAULS

THE GAULS ENTER ROME.

IN the year 387 B.C., the Gauls under Brennus invaded Italy. At the river Allia, a branch of the Tiber, they defeated the Romans with great slaughter, and might at once have entered the city, but delayed, being amazed at their own success.

AT the enemy's first approach, it was supposed that they would begin the attack, as soon as they should arrive at the city, since, if this were not their intention, they would probably have remained at the Allia. The fears of the citizens were various; first, they imagined that the place would be instantly stormed, because there was not much of the day remaining; then that the design was put off until night, in order to strike the greater terror. At last, the approach of light sunk them in dismay, and the evil itself which they dreaded, closed this scene of unremitted apprehension, the enemy marching through the gates in hostile array. During that night, however, and also the following day, the state preserved a character, very different from that which such a dastardly flight at the Allia had indicated: for there being no room to hope, that the city could possibly be defended by the small number of troops remaining, a resolution was taken, that the young men who were fit to bear arms, and the abler part of the senate, with their wives and children, should go up into the citadel and the Capitol; and having collected stores of arms and corn, should, in that strong post, maintain the defence of the deities, of the inhabitants, and of the honor of Rome. That the Flamen Quirinalis, and the vestal priestesses, should carry away, far from slaughter and conflagration, all that appertained to the gods of the state; and that their worship should not be intermitted until there should be no one left to perform it. That such of this deserted multitude as consisted of plebeians, might bear their doom with the greater resignation, the aged nobles, formerly dignified with triumphal honors and consulships, openly declared, that "they would meet death along with them, and would not burthen the scanty stores of the fighting men, with bodies incapable of carrying arms, and of protecting their country."

Such were the consolations addressed to each other by the aged who were destined to death.

Their exhortations were then turned to the band of young men, whom they escorted to the Capitol and citadel, commending to their valor and youthful vigor the remaining fortune of their city, which, through the course of three hundred and sixty years, had ever been victorious in all its wars. When those who carried with them every hope and every resource, parted with the others, who had determined not to survive the capture and destruction of the city, the view which it exhibited was sufficient to call forth the liveliest feelings, the women at the same time running up and down in distraction, now following one party, then the other, asking their husbands and their sons, to what fate they would consign them? All together formed such a picture of human woe as could admit of no aggravation. A great part, however, of the women followed their relatives into the citadel, no one either hindering or inviting them; because, though the measure of lessening the number of useless persons, in a siege, might doubtless be advisable in one point of view, yet it was a measure of extreme inhumanity. The rest of the multitude, consisting chiefly of plebeians, for whom there was neither room on so small a hill, nor a possibility of support in so great a scarcity of corn, pouring out of the city in one continued train, repaired to the Janiculum.

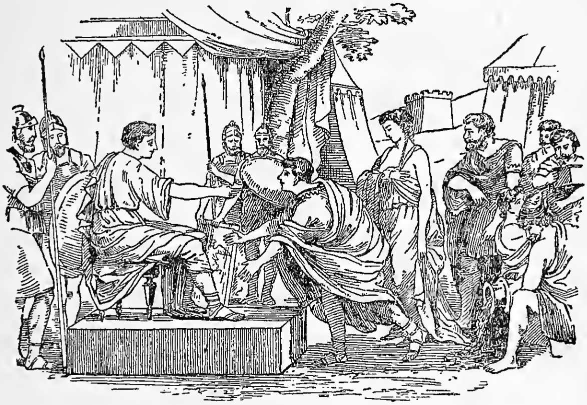
Meanwhile at Rome, when every disposition for the defence of the citadel had been completed, as far as was possible, the aged crowd withdrew to their houses, and there, with a firmness of mind not to be shaken by the approach of death, waited the coming of the enemy: such of them as had held curule offices, choosing to die in that garb which displayed the emblems of their former fortune, of their honors, or of their merit, put on the most splendid robes worn, when they drew the chariots of the gods in procession, or rode in triumph. Thus habited, they seated themselves in their ivory chairs at the fronts of their houses. Some say that they devoted themselves for the safety of their country and their fellow-citizens; and that they sung a hymn upon the occasion, Marcus Fabius, the chief pontiff, dictating the form of words to them. On the side of the Gauls, as the keenness of their rage, excited by the fight, had abated during the night; and, as they had neither met any dangerous opposition in the field, nor were now taking the city by storm or force; they marched next day, without any anger or any heat of passion, into the city, through the Colline gate, which stood open, and advanced to the Forum, casting round their eyes on the temples of the gods, and on the citadel, the only place which had the appearance of making resistance. From thence, leaving a small guard to prevent any attack from the citadel or Capitol, they ran about in quest of plunder. Not meeting a human being in the streets, part of them rushed in a body to the houses that stood nearest; part sought the most distant, as expecting to find them untouched and abounding with spoil. Afterwards, being frightened from thence by the very solitude, and fearing lest some secret design of the enemy might be put in execution against them, while they were thus dispersed; they formed themselves into bodies, and returned again to the Forum and places adjoining to it. Finding the houses of the plebeians shut up, and the palaces of the nobles standing open, they showed rather greater backwardness to attack these that were open, than such as were shut; with such a degree of veneration did they behold men sitting in the porches of those palaces, who, beside their ornaments and apparel, more splendid than became mortals, bore the nearest resemblances to gods, in the majesty displayed in their looks, and the gravity of their countenances. It is said, that while they stood gazing as on statues, one of them, Marcus Papirius, provoked the anger of a Gaul, by striking him on the head with his ivory sceptre, while he was stroking his beard, which at that time was universally worn long; that the slaughter began with him, and that the rest were slain in their seats. The nobles being put to death, the remainder of the people met the same fate. The houses were plundered and then set on fire.

SCIPIO AND ALLUCIUS.

[WHILE Publius Scipio had charge of Roman affairs in Spain], a captive was brought before him by his soldiers—a grown-up maiden of such remarkable beauty, that wherever she moved she attracted the eyes of all. Scipio inquired her country and her parentage, and ascertained, among other things, that she was affianced to a young chief of the Celtiberi, whose name was Allucius. He at once sent for her lover and her parents from their homes, and heard in the meanwhile that the youth was passionately attached to her.

As soon as they arrived, he addressed himself to the lover more particularly than to the parents: "I address myself," said he, "as one young man to another, that there may be less embarrassment between us in this interview. When your betrothed bride was brought to me by our soldiers, I heard that you were very much in love with her—a fact which indeed her beauty makes me readily believe, inasmuch as, were I at liberty to indulge the passions natural to my age, especially in a honorable and lawful way, and if public duty did not engross all my thoughts, I might have claimed indulgence, had I become desperately enamored of some lady myself. Your passion, at least, I can favor, and I do. Your betrothed has been treated with the same respect while in my charge as she would have been under the roof of her own parents and your future connections. She has been kept safe for you, that I might present her to you untarnished, a gift worthy alike of myself and you. This one return I bargain for in repayment for this gift of mine. Become the friend of the Roman people. And if you believe me to be a man of honor, as these tribes know my father and my uncle to have been, I would have you learn that there are many like us in the state of Rome, and that no nation can be named at this day upon earth whom you ought less to wish to have for enemies to you and yours, or should prefer as friends."

The young chief, overwhelmed with embarrassment and joy, grasped Scipio's hand, and called upon all the gods to repay his benefactor an obligation which it would never be in his own power to discharge in any way correspondent to his own feelings and Scipio's claims upon his gratitude. Then the maiden's parents and relatives were summoned. Finding that she was to be restored to them gratuitously, whereas they had come prepared with a considerable weight of gold for her ransom, they began to entreat Scipio to receive it from them as a present, protesting that in so doing he would confer upon them an obligation not less than this free and honorable restoration of their daughter. Seeing them so earnest in their request, Scipio promised that he would accept the gold, and ordered it to be laid at his feet. Then, calling Allucius to him, he said: "As an addition to the dowry which you will receive from your father-in-law, take this as my wedding present;" and he desired him to take the gold for himself.



The bridegroom took his leave, delighted alike at the gift and the compliment, and went home to fill the ears of his countrymen with the praises of Scipio: "There had come upon earth a hero like unto the gods, conquering all men not only by his valor, but by his kindness and munificence." And he straightweay made a levy of his retainers, and, with fifteen hundred picked horsemen, returned in a few days to Scipio.

THE ROMAN DEBATE ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

THE Oppian law, enacted during the heat of the Punic War, required that "no woman should possess more than half an ounce of gold, or wear a garment of various colors, or ride in a carriage drawn by horses, in a city, or any town, or any place nearer thereto than one mile; except on occasion of some public religious solemnity." In the year 196 B.C. two tribunes of the people proposed to repeal this law, while two other tribunes opposed the movement. Many of the nobility argued for and against the motion proposed. Livy's account of the agitation in Rome and the debate in the Senate has many features of modern aspect.

THE Capitol was filled with crowds, who favored or opposed the law; nor could the matrons be kept at home, either by advice or shame, nor even by the commands of their husbands; but beset every street and passage in the city, beseeching the men as they went down to the forum, that in the present flourishing state of the commonwealth, when the private fortune of all was daily increasing, they would suffer the women to have their former ornaments of dress restored. This throng of women increased daily, for they arrived even from the country towns and villages; and they had at length the boldness to approach the consuls, prætors, and magistrates, to urge their request. One of the consuls, however, they found especially inexorable—Marcus Porcius Cato—who, in support of the existing law, spoke to this effect:

"If, Romans, every man among us had made it a rule to maintain the husband's prerogative and authority with respect to his own wife, we should have less trouble with the whole sex. But now, our rights, being overpowered at home by female contumacy, are, even here in the forum, spurned and trodden under foot; and because we are unable to withstand each woman separately, we now dread their collective body. I was accustomed to think it a fabulous and fictitious tale, that, in a certain island the whole race of males was utterly extirpated by a conspiracy of the women. But the utmost danger may be apprehended equally from either sex, if you suffer cabals, assemblies, and secret consultations to be held: scarcely, indeed, can I determine, in my own mind, whether the act itself, or the precedent that it affords, is of more pernicious tendency. The latter of these more particularly concerns us consuls and the other magistrates: the former concerns you all. It was not without painful emotions of shame, that I just now made my way into the forum through the midst of a band of women. Had I not been restrained by respect for the modesty and dignity of some individuals among them, rather than of the whole number, and been unwilling that they should be seen rebuked by a consul, I should have said to them, 'What sort of practice is this, of running out into public, crowding the streets, and addressing other women's husbands? Could not each have made the same request to her husband at home? Are your blandishments more seducing in public than in private; and with other women's husbands than with your own? Although if the modesty of matrons confined them within the limits of their own rights, it did not become you, even at home, to concern yourselves about what laws might be passed or repealed here.'

"Our ancestors thought it not proper that women should perform any, even private business, without a director; but that they should be ever under the control of parents, brothers, or husbands. We, it seems, suffer them now to interfere in the management of state affairs, and to introduce themselves into the forum, into general assemblies, and into assemblies of election. For, what are they doing at this moment in your streets and lanes? What but arguing, some in support of the motion of the plebeian tribunes; others for the repeal of the law? Will you give the reins to their intractable nature, and their uncontrolled passions, and then expect that themselves should set bounds to their licentiousness, when you have failed to do so? This is the smallest of the injunctions laid on them by usage or the laws, all which women bear with impatience: they long for liberty; or rather, to speak the truth, for unbounded freedom in every particular. What will they not attempt if they now come off victorious?

"Recollect all the institutions respecting the sex, by which our forefathers restrained their undue freedom, and by which they subjected them to their husbands; and yet, even with the help of all these restrictions, you can scarcely keep them within bounds. If, then, you suffer them to throw these off one by one, to tear them all asunder, and, at last, to be set on an equal footing with yourselves, can you imagine that they will be any longer endurable by you? The moment they have arrived at an equality with you, they will have become your superiors.

"I should like, however, to hear what this important affair is which has induced the matrons thus to run out into public in this excited manner, scarcely refraining from pushing into the forum and the assembly of the people. Is it to solicit that their parents, their husbands, children, and brothers may be ransomed from captivity under Hannibal? By no means: and far be ever from the commonwealth so unfortunate a situation. Yet, even when such was the case, you refused this to their prayers. But it is not duty, nor solicitude for their friends; it is religion that has collected them together. They are about to receive the new goddess, the Idæan mother (Cybele) coming out of Phrygia! What motive, that even common decency will allow to be mentioned, is pretended for this female insurrection? Why, say they, that we may shine in gold and purple; that, both on festal and common days, we may ride through the city in our chariots, triumphing over vanquished and abrogated law, after having captured and wrested from you your suffrages; and that there may be no bounds to our expenses and our luxury.

"Often have you heard me complain of the profuse expenses of the women—often of those of the men; and that not only of men in private stations, but of the magistrates: and that the state was endangered by two opposite vices, luxury and avarice; those pests, which have been the ruin of all great empires. These I dread the more, as the circumstances of the commonwealth grow daily more prosperous and happy; as the empire increases; as we have now passed over into Greece and Asia, places abounding with every kind of temptation that can inflame the passions; and as we have begun to handle even royal treasures, so much the more do I fear that these matters will bring us into captivity, rather than we them.

"Do not suppose that the matter will hereafter be in the same state in which it was before the law was made on the subject. It is safer that a wicked man should even never be accused, than that he should be acquitted; and luxury, if it

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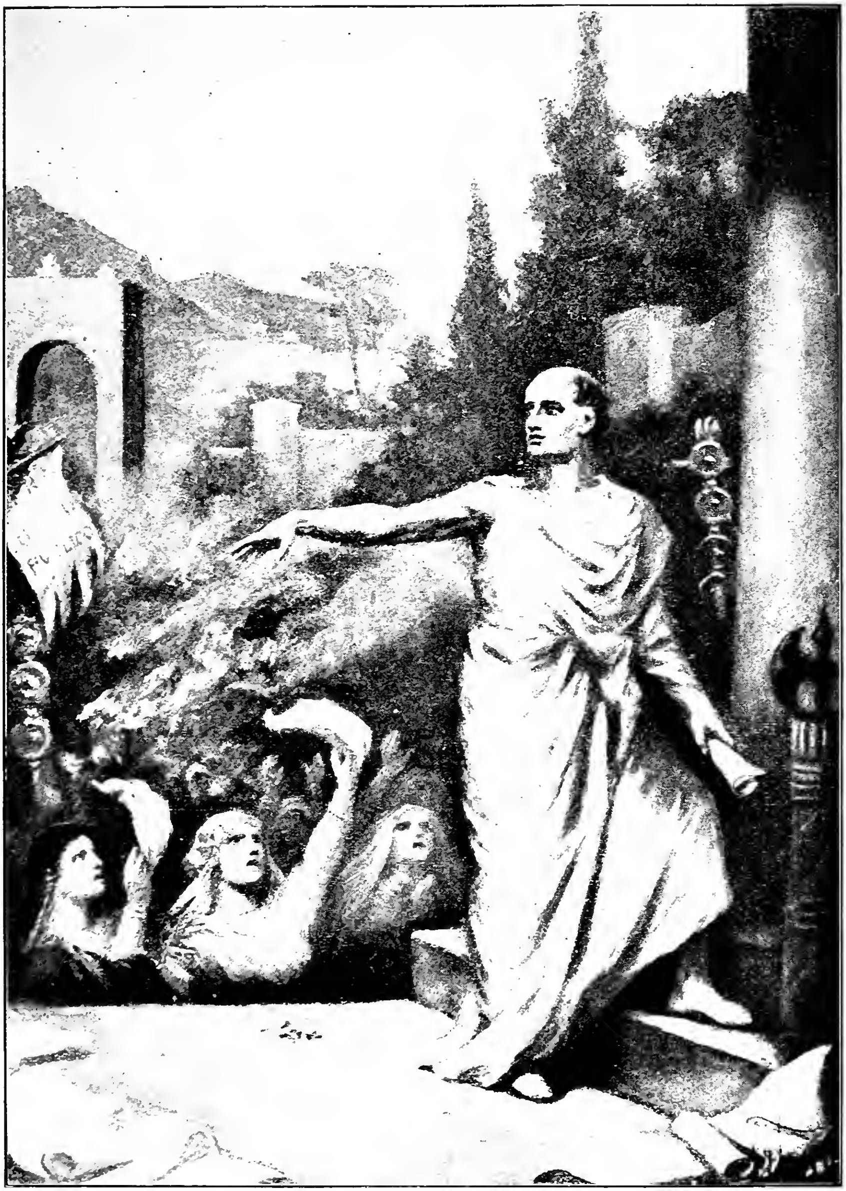

S. J. FERRIS, PINX

CATO BESET BY THE ROMAN WOMEN

had never been meddled with, would be more tolerable than it will be now, like a wild beast, irritated by having been chained, and then let loose. My opinion is that the Oppian law ought, on no account, to be repealed. Whatever determination you may come to, I pray all the gods to prosper it."

After him the plebeian tribunes, who had declared their intention of protesting, added a few words to the same purport. Then Lucius Valerius spoke thus in support of the measure which he himself had introduced:—"If private persons only had stood forth to argue for and against the proposition which we have submitted to your consideration, I for my part, thinking enough to have been said on both sides, would have waited in silence for your determination. But since a person of most respectable judgment, the consul, Marcus Porcius Cato, has reprobated our motion, not only by the influence of his opinion, which, had he said nothing, would carry very great weight, but also in a long and careful discourse, it becomes necessary to say a few words in answer. He has spent more words in rebuking the matrons than in arguing against the measure proposed; and even went so far as to mention a doubt, whether the matrons had committed the conduct which he censured in them spontaneously or at our instigation. I shall defend the measure, not ourselves: for the consul threw out those insinuations against us, rather for argument's sake, than as a serious charge. He has made use of the terms 'cabal and sedition,' and, again, 'secession of the women:' because the matrons had requested of you, in the public streets, that, in this time of peace, when the commonwealth is flourishing and happy, you would repeal a law that was made against them during a war, and in times of distress. I know that these and other similar strong expressions are easily invented for the purpose of exaggeration; and, mild as Marcus Cato is in his disposition, yet in his speeches he is not only vehement, but sometimes even austere. What new thing, let me ask, have the matrons done in coming out into public in a body on an occasion which nearly concerns themselves? Have they never before appeared in public? I will turn over your own Antiquities,* and quote them against you.

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* Cato's "Origines," or Early History of Rome, which has been lost.

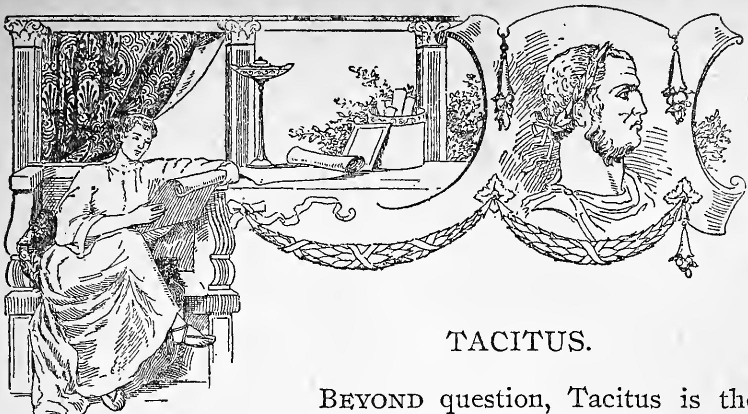
Hear, now, how often they have done the same, and always to the advantage of the public. In the earliest period of our history, even in the reign of Romulus, when the Capitol had been taken by the Sabines, and a pitched battle was fought in the Forum, was not the fight stopped by the intervention of the matrons between the two armies? When, after the expulsion of the kings, the legions of the Volscians, under the command of Marcius Coriolanus, were encamped at the fifth milestone, did not the matrons turn away that army, which would have overwhelmed this city? Again, when Rome was taken by the Gauls, whence was the city ransomed? Did not the matrons, by unanimous agreement, bring their gold into the public treasury? In the late war [against Hannibal], not to go back to remote antiquity, when there was a want of money, did not the funds of the widows supply the treasury? And when even new gods were invited hither to the relief of our distressed affairs, did not the matrons go out in a body to the seashore to receive the Idæan Mother?

"I come now to the question in debate, with respect to which the consul's argument is two-fold: for, first, he is displeased at the thought of any law whatever being repealed; and then, particularly, of that law which was made to restrain female luxury. His former argument, in support of the laws in general, appeared highly becoming of a consul; and that on the latter, against luxury, was quite conformable to the rigid strictness of his morals. . . .

"Now, is there a man among you who does not know that this is a new law, passed not more than twenty years ago, in the consulate of Quintus Fabius and Tiberius Sempronius? And as, without it, our matrons sustained, for such a number of years, the most virtuous characters, what danger is there of their abandoning themselves to luxury on its being repealed? For, if that law had been passed for the purpose of setting a limit to the passions of the sex, there would be reason to fear lest the repeal of it might operate as an incitement to them. But the real reason of its being passed, the time itself will show. Hannibal was then in Italy, victorious at Cannæ: he already held possession of Tarentum, of Arpi, of Capua, and seemed ready to bring up his army to the city of Rome. Our allies had deserted us. We had neither soldiers to fill up the legions, nor seamen to man the fleet, nor money in the treasury. Under these circumstances, who does not clearly see that the poverty and distress of the state, requiring that every private person's money should be converted to the use of the public, brought into being that law, with intent that it should remain in force so long only as the cause of enacting the law should remain?

"Shall, then, every other class of people, every individual, feel the improvement in the condition of the state; and shall our wives alone reap none of the fruits of the public peace and tranquillity? Shall we men have the use of purple, wearing the purple-bordered gown in magistracies and priests' offices? Shall our children wear purple-bordered gowns? Shall we allow the privilege of wearing such gowns to the magistrates of the colonies and borough towns, and to the lowest of them here at Rome, the superintendents of the streets; and not only of wearing such an ornament of distinction while alive, but of being buried with it when dead; and shall we interdict the use of purple to women alone? And when you, the husband, may wear purple in your great coat, will you not suffer your wife to have a purple mantle? Shall your horse be more splendidly caparisoned than your wife is clothed? But with respect to purple, which will be worn out and consumed, I can see an unjust, indeed, but still a sort of reason, for parsimony; but with respect to gold, in which, excepting the price of the workmanship, there is no waste, what objection can there be? It rather serves as a reserve fund for both public and private exigencies, as you have already experienced. Cato says there will be no emulation between individuals, when no one is possessed of it. But, in truth, it will be a source of indignation to all, when they see those ornaments allowed to the wives of the Latin confederates of which they themselves have been deprived; when they see those women riding through the city in their carriages, and decorated with gold and purple, while they are obliged to follow on foot, as if the seat of empire were in the country of the others, not in their own. This would hurt the feelings even of men, and what do you think must be its effect on those of weak women, whom even trifles can disturb? Neither offices of state, nor of the priesthood, nor triumphs, nor badges of distinction, nor military presents, nor spoils, can fall to their share. Elegance of appearance, and ornaments, and dress, these are the women's badges of distinction; in these they delight and glory; these our ancestors called the women's world. What else do they lay aside when in mourning, except their gold and purple? And what else do they resume when the mourning is over? How do they distinguish themselves on occasion of public thanksgivings and supplications, but by adding unusual splendor of dress? But then (it may be said) if you repeal the Oppian law, should you choose to prohibit any of those particulars which the law at present prohibits, you will not have it in your power; your daughters, wives, and even the sisters of some, will be less under control. The bondage of women is never shaken off without the loss of their friends; and they themselves look with horror on that freedom which is purchased with the condition of the widow or the orphan. Their wish is, that their dress should be under your individual regulation, as husbands and fathers, not under that of the law; and it ought to be your wish to hold the women in control and guardianship, not in bondage; and to prefer the title of father or husband to that of master. The consul just now made use of some invidious terms, calling it a female sedition and secession; because, I suppose, there is danger of their seizing the Sacred Mount, as formerly the angry plebeians did, or the Aventine. Their feeble nature must submit to whatever you think proper to enjoin; and, the greater power you possess, the more moderate ought you to be in the exercise of your authority."

Although all these considerations had been urged against the motion and in its favor, the women next day poured out into public in much greater numbers, and in a body beset the doors of the tribunes who had protested against the measure of their colleagues; nor did they retire until this intervention was withdrawn. There was then no further doubt that every one of the tribes would vote for the repeal of the law. Thus was this law annulled, in the twentieth year after it had been made.



TACITUS.

Beyond question, Tacitus is the greatest of Roman historians, as Thucydides is of the Greek. Like the latter, Tacitus chose for his theme a period with which he was practically familiar, having himself been engaged in public life. His field was vaster than that of the Athenian historian, and the events were of more consequence to the world in general, yet in philosophic insight into the causes and tendencies of events he does not equal his great predecessor. Tacitus related the history of the early Roman empire from 14 to 97 A.D., but only parts of his works have been preserved, which do not bring the narrative later than 70 A.D. His moral purpose is revealed in his statement of the historian's duty, "to rescue merit from oblivion, and to expose evil words and actions to the reprobation of posterity." This purpose he faithfully executed with regard to some of the best and some of the worst Roman emperors, as well as other prominent men and women of the time. His chief excellence, indeed, lies in the delineation of characters; to each of those described he imparts a distinctive individuality, such as is seldom seen except in the works of the greatest dramatists and novelists, yet the portraits drawn by Tacitus are felt to have inherent fidelity to facts.

The dates of the birth and death of this eminent historian are matters of inference from scanty data. Caius Cornelius Tacitus was born about 52 A.D., and seems to have lived beyond 117. In spite of this uncertainty about dates, he was a man of noble family and connections, and early attained eminence as a pleader at the bar. According to his own statement, his promotion was begun by Vespasian, augmented by Titus, and further advanced by Domitian. In 88 he was prætor, afterwards was in the Senate, and in 97 was made consul. He confesses that while he was in the Senate he was an unwilling participant in deeds of blood and persecution carried out by the imperial will under forms of law. In the quiet reign of Trajan, when personal freedom was restored, Tacitus appears to have retired from public life to devote himself entirely to literary work, in which he had already won some distinction. Throughout his career he enjoyed the friendship of Pliny the Younger, and much of their correspondence has been preserved to shed grateful light on their times and characters.

Besides his two historical works, the "Histories" and the "Annals," which form in fact a continuous narrative, Tacitus wrote an admirable, though highly eulogistic, biography of his father-in-law, Julius Agricola. As this man was the Roman conqueror of Britain, Tacitus gives considerable information about the inhabitants of that island. Another work which has proved of great value in recent researches in race-history, is his description of Germany and its tribes. Tacitus had never visited that country, but he was deeply impressed with the reports brought by those who had come into close contact with the fair-haired, blue-eyed Teutons. In their barbarian freedom and simplicity he recognized something akin to ancestral Roman virtue, and he warned his countrymen of the danger of sinking to inferiority to the hardy warriors beyond the Rhine. Perhaps the earliest of the writings of Tacitus was the "Dialogue on Orators," in which he discusses the cause of the decay of Roman eloquence. In all his works he displays a conservative spirit. He sees the demoralization prevailing and increasing under the Empire, and he looks back regretfully and wistfully to the old senatorial rule, under which the glory of Rome had steadily advanced. Examples of virtue, public and private, could still be found in his own degenerate days, but he feared that the excess of wealth, and consequent luxury, and the influx of a heterogeneous multitude had destroyed the vitality of the commonwealth. The style of Tacitus is marked by brevity and epigrammatic conciseness. While usually brief and rapid in his sketches, he sometimes goes into minute detail in dramatic passages. His extreme condensation often renders his meaning obscure, as the precise meaning of a single word gives effect to a whole sentence, and if that be missed, the significance of all is blurred. Hence he is one of the most difficult authors to translate. Frequent reading is necessary to bring out the full meaning of his pregnant sentences.

THE DEATH OF TIBERIUS.

(From the Annals, Book VI.)

THE bodily powers of Tiberius were now leaving him, but not his skill in dissembling. There was the same stern spirit; he had his words and his looks under strict control; and occasionally would try to hide his weakness, evident as it was, by a forced politeness. After frequent changes of place, he at last settled down on the promontory of Misenum, in a country-house once owned by Lucius Lucullus. It was there discovered that he was drawing near his end; and thus there was a physician of the name of Charicles usually employed, not indeed to have the direction of the Emperor's varying health, but to put his advice at his immediate disposal. This man, as if he were leaving on business of his own, clasped his hand with a show of homage, and touched his pulse. Tiberius noticed it. Whether he was displeased, and strove the more to hide his anger, is a question. At any rate, he ordered the banquet to be resumed, and sat at the table longer than usual, apparently by way of showing honor to his departing friend. Charicles, however, assured Macro that his breath was failing, and that he would not last more than two days. All was at once hurry; there were conferences among those on the spot, and dispatches to the generals and armies. On the 15th of March [37 A.D.] his breath failing, he was believed to have expired; and Caius Cæsar [Caligula] was going forth, with a throng of congratulating followers, to take first possession of the empire, when suddenly news came that Tiberius was recovering his voice and sight, and calling for persons to bring him food to restore him from his faintness. Then ensued a universal panic; and while the rest fled hither and thither, every one feigning grief or ignorance, Caius Cæsar, in silent stupor, passed from the highest hopes to the extremity of apprehension. Macro, nothing daunted, ordered the old emperor to be smothered under a huge heap of clothes, and all to quit the entrance-hall.

Thus died Tiberius, in the seventy-eighth year of his age. His father was Nero, and he was on both sides descended from the Claudian house, though his mother passed, by adoption, first into the Livian, then into the Julian family. From earliest infancy perilous vicissitudes were his lot. Himself an exile, he was the companion of a proscribed father; and on being admitted as a step-son into the house of Augustus, he had to struggle with many rivals so long as Marcellus and Agrippa, and subsequently Caius and Lucius Cæsar, were in their glory. Again, his brother Drusus enjoyed in a greater degree the affection of the citizens. But he was more than ever on dangerous ground after his marriage with Julia, whether he tolerated or escaped from his wife's profligacy. On his return from Rhodes he ruled the Emperor's now heirless house for twelve years, and the Roman world, with absolute sway, for twenty-three. His character, too, had its distinct periods. It was a bright time in his life and reputation when, under Augustus, he was a private citizen or held high offices; a time of reserve and crafty assumption of virtue as long as Germanicus and Drusus were alive. Again, while his mother lived he was a compound of good and evil. He was infamous for his cruelty, though he veiled his debaucheries while he loved or feared Sejanus. Finally he plunged into every wickedness and disgrace when, fear and shame being cast off, he simply indulged his own inclinations.

HIS MENTION OF CHRIST.

THIS brief reference to Jesus Christ, inserted as a trifling circumstance in the life of Nero, Carlyle pronounces "the most earnest, sad and sternly significant passage that we know to exist in writing."

So, for the quieting of this rumor [of his having set fire to Rome], Nero judicially charged with the crime, and punished with most studied severities, that class, hated for their general wickedness, whom the vulgar called *Christians*. The originator of that name was one CHRIST, who, in the reign of Tiberius, suffered death by sentence of the Procurator, Pontius Pilate. The baneful superstition, thereby repressed for the time, again broke out, not only over Judea, the native soil of that mischief, but in the city [Rome] also, where from every side all atrocious and abominable things collect and flourish.

NERO SLAYS HIS MOTHER.

NERO at length feeling his mother [Agrippina] as an oppression to him wherever she resided, resolved to kill her, and was in suspense only about the mode; by poison, the sword, or any other violent means. Anicetus, an enfranchised slave, tutor to Nero in his infancy, but now commander of the fleet at Misenum, hated by and hating Agrippina, here proffered the aid of his ingenuity. Accordingly he explained, "how a vessel might be so constructed that a portion of it might by a contrivance fall to pieces and plunge her unawares into the water. Nothing," he said, "was so prolific in accidents as the sea; and if she were thus cut off by shipwreck, who could be so injurious as to ascribe the offence of wind and waves to the malice of men? The prince should also erect a temple and altars to the deceased, and adopt every other means of parading his filial reverence."

Nero was pleased with the device, which was also favored by the particular juncture, for he was then keeping the holidays at Baiæ. Thither he enticed his mother, frequently declaring "that the hasty humor of parents should be borne with, and her spirit should be soothed," in order to raise a rumor of his being reconciled to her, which Agrippina might believe with the credulous facility with which women acquiesce in whatever gratifies their wishes. When she approached he met her upon the shore—for she came from Antium—gave her his hand, embraced her, and conducted her to Bauli; so the villa is called, which, lying between the cape of Misenum and the gulf of Baiæ, is washed by the winding sea. Here, among other vessels, lay one more ornamental than the rest, as if in this too he sought to honor his mother; for she had been always wont to make her excursions in a galley with three banks of oars, rowed by mariners from the fleet. She was then invited to a banquet, that the shades of night might assist in shrouding the horrid deed. It was, however, apparent that somebody had betrayed the design, since Agrippina, upon hearing of the plot, though doubtful whether to believe it, was conveyed to Baiæ in a litter; but, upon her arrival, his caresses assuaged her fear. He received her graciously, and placed her at table above him; entertained and amused her with a variety of conversation; at one time with the frankness natural to youth, at another with an air of gravity, pretending to communicate with her upon serious topics: and after he had drawn out the banquet to a late hour, he escorted her on her departure, fixing his eyes upon her, and clinging to her bosom, whether it was to complete the hollow part he had assumed, or that the last sight of a mother on the point of perishing, had power to fix the attention of his mind, though brutalized.

The gods, as if to bear damning testimony against the impious deed, granted a night lit up with stars; while not a breath disturbed the unruffled deep. Agrippina was attended by two only of all her train, of whom Crepereius Gallus stood by the steerage, and Aceronia, who, as Agrippina reposed, lay at her feet, was again setting before her, with joy, the remorse of her son, and her recovered influence with him: the vessel had not yet made much way, when suddenly, upon a given signal, the roof of the cabin fell in, being loaded with a quantity of lead, and instantly crushed Crepereius to death. Agrippina and Aceronia were protected by the sides of the couch, which rose above them, and happened to be too strong to yield to the weight: neither did the vessel at once fall to pieces; for the sailors were all in confusion, and the greater part of them, not being privy to the plot, embarrassed even such as were. The sailors then proposed to bear the vessel down on one side, and so sink her: but neither did all the accomplices themselves fall in with a project thus startling; and others resisting it, diminished the violence with which they were thrown into the sea. Now Aceronia, little thinking of the consequence, while she cried out that she was

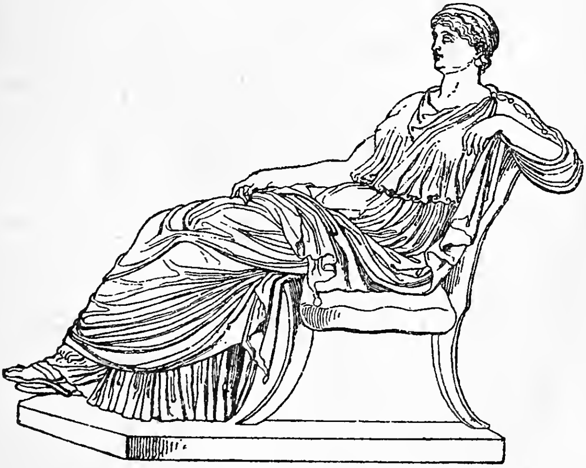
Agrippina, and bade them succor the prince's mother, was pursued with poles and oars, and whatever other naval weapons came first to hand, and so slain. Agrippina kept silence, and being therefore the less known, escaped, with one wound, however, upon her shoulder. By swimming, and then meeting with some small barks, she reached the lake Lucrinus, and was thence conducted to her own villa.

There, reflecting that for this very end she had been summoned by the fraudulent letters of her son, and treated with especial honor: that the vessel, close to the shore, not from the violence of winds, or from striking upon rocks, had given way in its upper works, and fallen to pieces like a frail structure for land purposes; taking into her consideration also the fate of Aceronia, and looking upon her own wound, she inferred that her only resource against these treacherous machinations was to act as if she saw them not. With this view she dispatched Agerinus, her freedman, to notify to her son, "that through the mercy of the gods, and the auspicious influence of his fortune, she had escaped a grievous casualty; but besought him, however terrified at the danger which had threatened his mother, to postpone the attention of visiting her; for what she needed at present was rest."

As for Nero, while he was waiting for messengers to apprise him that the deed was done, tidings arrived "that she had escaped with a slight hurt; having been so far imperilled as to leave no doubt who was the author." Overpowered with terror and dismay at this intelligence, he summoned Burrus and Seneca; it is not clear whether they were previously informed of the conspiracy: they both kept silence for a long time, either lest they should fail in dissuading him from his purpose, or else convinced that matters had gone so far that either Agrippina must be cut off or Nero perish. At length Seneca, heretofore the more forward, fixed his eyes on Burrus, and asked, "whether orders for this execution might be given to the soldiery?" he answered, that "the pretorian guards were so attached to the whole family of the Cæsars, and so revered the memory of Germanicus, that they would shrink from executing severity on one of his descendants: Anicetus should carry out his engagement." Anicetus paused not a moment, but even demanded the task of completing the murder. Nero at these words declared himself to be that day presented with the empire, and that his freedman was the author of the costly present. He bade him hasten, and take with him such as would most promptly execute his orders. The freedman, however, having heard that Agerinus had arrived as a messenger from Agrippina, contrived a plot to turn the treason upon her: as he was delivering his message, Anicetus dropped a dagger between his feet; and then, as if he had caught him in treason, ordered him to be put in chains. This he did to give consistency to a fiction, that the mother of the emperor had concerted his destruction, and then from shame, on the detection of the treason, had put herself to death.

Meanwhile the circumstance of Agrippina's peril had been made known among the people, and as it was represented as the effect of pure accident, each, as soon as he heard it, hastened down to the beach. Some climbed up the piers which jut out into the sea; some got into the barks that were at hand; others entered the sea, and waded as far as their height would permit; some stretched out their arms; so that the whole coast resounded with lamentations, with vows, and with the shouts of the multitude, asking various questions, or returning unsatisfactory answers. A great number crowded to the spot with torches in their hands; and, as soon as it was confirmed that Agrippina was out of danger, they were preparing to offer her their congratulations, when an armed band appearing and threatening them, they were dispersed. Anicetus beset the villa with a guard, and bursting open the gates, seized such of her slaves as he met on his way to the door of her chamber, which he found guarded by very few, the rest being scared away by the terror of the irruption. In her chamber was a small light, and only one of her maids. Agrippina was more and more agitated with anxious thoughts that no one had yet arrived from her son, not even Agerinus: she observed the alteration in the general aspect of the shore, the solitude that reigned, startling noises, and symptoms of some dire catastrophe. Her maid then leaving her, she said, "You too are deserting me;" when, looking round, she saw Anicetus, accompanied by Herculeus, captain of a galley, and Oloaritus, a centurion of the navy: she told him, "if he came from the emperor to be informed of her health, to say she was revived; if for any sanguinary purpose, she would never believe it of her son; he had never given orders for parricide." The assassins placed themselves round her bed, the captain first struck her violently upon the head with a club: but to the centurion, as he was drawing his sword to dispatch her, she presented her womb, crying with a loud voice, "Strike your sword into my belly." She was instantly dispatched with a number of wounds.

In these particulars authors are unanimous: but as to whether Nero surveyed the breathless body of his mother, and applauded its beauty, there are those who have affirmed it, and those who deny it. Her body was committed to the funeral pile the same night on a common couch; and her obsequies performed in a mean manner: neither, during the reign of Nero, was any tomb raised, nor her grave enclosed. Agrippina had been taught to expect many years before that she would end her life thus, but cared not for it: for the Chaldeans, whom she consulted on the fortune of Nero, answered, that "he would certainly reign, and kill his mother;" when she replied, "Let him kill me, provided he reign."



AGRIPPINA, THE MOTHER OF NERO.

PHÆDRUS.

As Æsop was recognized as the Greek fabulist, his imitator, Phædrus, was the acknowledged Roman writer of this kind. According to his own account, he was a Thracian by birth, had been brought to Rome as a slave, and was made a freedman by Augustus. During the reign of Tiberius his literary skill was employed in putting into Latin verse such stories as had already been collected and versified in Greek by Babrius. Though most of the matter was not original, he used freedom in handling it, and had such grace of style as to give him an assured position among the writers of the Silver Age. His satire was lively, and his brevity and ingenuity admirable. For the cultivated Romans, satiated with pretentious mediocrity, his simple apologues had the attraction of novelty. He is said to have been persecuted by Sejanus, who discovered personal attacks in some of his fables.

THE FROGS AND THE SUN.

WHEN Æsop saw, with inward grief,
The nuptials of a neighboring thief,
He thus his narrative begun:
Of old 'twas rumored that the Sun
Would take a wife: with hideous cries
The querulous Frogs alarmed the skies.
Moved at their murmurs, Jove inquired,
What was the thing that they desired?
When thus a tenant of the lake
In terror for his brethren spake:
"Even now one Sun too much is found,
And dries up all the pools around,
Till we thy creatures perish here;
But oh, how dreadfully severe,
Should he at length be made a sire,
And propagate a race of fire!"

THE LION AND THE MOUSE.

THIS fable is a moral song,
To bid us not inferiors wrong.

As fast asleep a Lion lay,
The sylvan Mice began to play,
Till one, by rash misconduct, leapt
Upon his body as he slept.
The Lion, rousing from his nap,
Seized instant on the little chap.—
But he begs pardon for the offence,
The fault of mere improvidence.
The king of beasts, who wisely knew
No glory could to him accrue
By taking vengeance for the deed,
At once the Mouse forgave and freed.
The Lion, in a little space,
As late at night he urged the chase,
Fell down into a pit, and there
Found himself tangled with a snare.
Then making all the roar he could,
The listening Mouse came from the wood,
And drawing near, " Be not afraid,
For I'll requite your love," he said.
Then he his nibbling skill applies,
And all the knots and joints he tries.
At last he loosens every thread,
With which his net the artist spread,
And leaving nothing unexplored,
The Lion to the woods restored.

PERSIUS.

Roman satire is representative of three distinct, though not very remote, periods of national history. Horace represents the palmy days of the empire; Persius, the rise of tyranny and the decline of literature; Juvenal, the period of national degeneracy and moral depravity. Nothing is more striking than the rapidity with which the literary tastes of the empire changed. Virgil's example and success caused an epidemic of epic-writing. Horace in like manner gave occasion for a tribe of satirists. Fifty years had scarcely passed from the publication of the Æneid, when Persius appeared to satirize the heroic verses written by the "scribbling schoolboys and unlettered dunces" of his times.

Aulus Persius Flaccus was born at Volterræ, in Etruria, in 34 A.D. Removing to Rome, he studied with the Stoic philosopher Cornutus. Between the teacher and his pupil there sprang up a paternal and filial affection which was interrupted only by the death of the latter in his twenty-eighth year. The young man acted up to his principles, and practised the discipline and self-restraint inculcated by his excellent tutor.

The satires of Persius—there are but six in all—are censured for obscurity, but that was a justifiable fault in the times, when to speak plainly would have led to death. The first satire, aimed at false taste in poetry and eloquence, is bitter in the extreme; those addressed to his teacher Cornutus and his friend Bassus, show amiability, affection and all the tenderness of true friendship.

THE STOIC INSTRUCTOR.

(From Satire V.—To Annæus Cornutus.)

YES, best of friends! 'tis now my pride to own,
How much that "breast" is fill'd with you alone!
Ring then—for, to your practised ear, the sound
Will show the solid, and where guile is found
Beneath the varnished tongue. For this, in fine,
I dared to wish an hundred voices mine;
Proud to declare, how closely twined you dwell—
How deeply fixed in my heart's inmost cell,
And paint, in words—ah, could they paint the whole!—
The ineffable sensations of my soul.
When first I laid the purple by—and free,
Yet trembling at my new-felt liberty,
Approached the hearth, and on the Lares hung
The bulla, from my willing neck unstrung;*
When gay associates, sporting at my side,
And the white boss, displayed with conscious pride,
Gave me, unchecked, the haunts of vice to trace,
And throw my wandering eyes on every face;

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* Roman boys of noble birth wore a purple-bordered gown and a golden ball, or bulla, hung from the neck. About the age of twelve these marks of childhood were laid aside, the bulla being given to the Lares or household gods.

When life's perplexing maze before me lay,
And error, heedless of the better way,
To straggling paths, far from the route of truth,
Wooed, with blind confidence, my timorous youth,
I fled to you, Cornutus, pleased to rest
My hopes and fears on your Socratic breast;
Nor did you, gentle sage, the charge decline:
Then, dexterous to beguile, your steady line
Reclaimed, I know not by what winning force,
My morals, warped from virtue's straighter course,
While reason pressed incumbent on my soul,
That struggled to receive the strong control,
And took, like wax, subdued by plastic skill,
The form your hand imposed—and bears it still!
  Can I forget, how many a summer's day,
Spent in your converse, stole unmarked away?
Or how, while listening with increased delight,
I snatched from feasts the earlier hours of night?
—One time (for to your bosom still I grew)
One time of study, and of rest, we knew;
One frugal board, where, every care resigned,
An hour of blameless mirth relaxed the mind.
  And sure our lives, which thus accordant move,
(Indulge me here, Cornutus,) clearly prove,
That both are subject to the self-same law,
And from one horoscope their fortunes draw:
And whether destiny's unerring doom
In equal Libra poised our days to come;
Or friendship's holy hour our fates combined,
And to the Twins a sacred charge assigned;
Or Jove, benignant, broke the gloomy spell
By angry Saturn wove;—I know not well—
But sure some star there is, whose bland control
Subdues to yours the temper of my soul!
  Countless the various species of mankind,
Countless the shades which separate mind from mind;
No general object of desire is known;
Each has his will, and each pursues his own.
With Latian wares, one roams the Eastern main,
To purchase spice, and cumin's blanching grain;
Another, gorged with dainties, swilled with wine,
Fattens in sloth, and snores out life supine;

This loves the Campus; that destructive play;
And those, in wanton dalliance, melt away:—
But when the knotty gout their strength has broke,
And their dry joints crack like some withered oak,
Then they look back, confounded and aghast
On the gross days in fogs and darkness past,
With late regret the waste of life deplore:
No purpose gained, and time, alas! no more.
  But you, my friend, whom nobler views delight,
To pallid vigils give the studious night,
Cleanse youthful breasts from every noxious weed,
And sow the tilth with Cleanthean seed—
There seek, ye young, ye old (secure to find),
That certain end, which stays the wavering mind;—
Stores which endure when other means decay,
Through life's last stage, a sad and cheerless way!
  "Right: and to-morrow this shall be our care."
Alas! to-morrow, like to-day, will fare.
  "What! is one day, forsooth, so great a boon?"
But when it comes (and come it will too soon),
Reflect that yesterday's to-morrow's o'er.—
Thus one "to-morrow!" one "to-morrow!" more,
Have seen long years before them fade away;
And still appear no nearer than to-day!—
  So while the wheels on different axles roll,
In vain (though governed by the self-same pole),
The hindmost to o'ertake the foremost tries;
Fast as the one pursues, the other flies!

THE SLOTHFUL PUPIL.

"WHAT? is it ever thus? Noon's entering ray
  Broadens the shutter's chinks with glare of day;
  But still you snoring lie; a spell of rest
  That might the surfeit-fumes of wine digest.
  The shadowed dial points eleven; arise!
  The dog-star heat is raging in the skies;
  The sun already burns the parching wheat,
  And the faint flocks to spreading elms retreat!"
  Thus to his hopeful charge some tutor cries:
"Indeed? and is it so?" the youth replies:

"Come quick, my slave!" Is none at hand? how green
His color instant changes with the spleen!
He splits his throat with rage: a man would say,
He heard a hundred asses deafening bray.
At length he's dressed; his book he handles then,
Fumbles his papers o'er, and dips his pen.
But now the ink in globules clots the quill;
Now, too diluted, pale weak drops distill
From the pen's point, and blot the paper o'er;
O wretched wight! and wretched more and more,
As every day grows old! and is it come
To this at last? are these the youth of Rome?
But why not rather then be cockered up
At home, and pap and tender spoon-meat sup,
Like royal infants, or pet doves, and cry
In peevish passion at the lullaby?
"How can I write with such a wretched pen?"
Are these excuses for the ears of men?
For ever whining is this shuffling tone?
Yours is the loss and ridicule alone.
Your life, poor silly one! is flowing by;
Contempt be sure will glance from every eye.
The jar ill-baked, when rung, will shrill betray,
With its cracked sound, the raw, unhardened clay.
You now are moist and ductile loam; begin,
Let the lathe turn, the wheel swift-circling spin,
And fashion you to shape. "But I've enough
Of victuals, and bright plate, and household stuff
And platters, safely stored, of ample size
To feed the fire with bits of sacrifice;
Then what have I to fear?" And is this all?
And do you puff and swell, if you can call
Some kinsman censor, wear a robe of state,
Or trace your pedigree to ancient date,
The thousandth from a Tuscan sire?—away!
Dazzle the crown with trappings, as you may;
My glance can pierce thee deeper than thy skin,
Can look thee through, and know thee from within.

SENECA.

SENECA is regarded as the foremost philosopher of the Roman empire, yet he was a rhetorical moralist rather than a genuine philosopher. Lucius Annæus Seneca was born at Corduba (now Cordova), in Spain, about 3 B.C. That country had accepted Roman civilization and the arts were flourishing there. But Seneca's father, who was an eminent rhetorician, took his son to Rome for his education, which was afterwards supplemented by travel in Greece and Egypt. Admitted to the bar, he soon won distinction as a pleader of causes. In due time he obtained a quæstorship, and seemed to have fairly entered on a political career, when an unproved charge of intimacy with Julia, the daughter of Germanicus, led her uncle, the Emperor Claudius, to banish him to Corsica. Here Seneca remained eight years, meantime writing letters to his mother, which form his treatise on "Consolation." Like the banished poet Ovid, he also tried to regain the emperor's favor by flattery in letters to a courtier. When Claudius married Agrippina, she induced him to recall Seneca that he might be the tutor of her son Domitius, known in history as the Emperor Nero. Seneca was also raised to the dignity of prætor, and when in 54 A.D. his pupil became emperor, he used his influence to check Nero's vicious propensities. Yet at the same time he profited by his position to become immensely wealthy, the possessor of villas and gardens in the country and a palatial residence in Rome. He supported Nero in his contests with his imperious mother, and was a party to her death in 60 A.D. He even wrote the letter which Nero addressed to the Senate in justification of her murder. This is the greatest blot on his reputation as a moralist. But the reaction from this subserviency proved fatal to himself. The very presence of Seneca became irksome to Nero, who had abandoned himself to his vicious propensities, while the teacher's wealth excited the emperor's cupidity. Nero, ambitious of fame as an artist, was also offended at the philosopher's reported disparagement of his skill in driving and music. Seneca, apprehending the course of events, asked permission to retire from court, and offered to surrender his estate. Nero affected to be grateful and declined the gift. Seneca, on the plea of ill health, altered his mode of life and kept himself secluded. But the emperor's favorites were urgent for his death, and a pretext was found for involving him in Piso's conspiracy in 65 A.D. When Seneca received the imperial mandate to terminate his own life, he cheered his weeping wife and friends with the lessons of philosophy. He opened veins in his legs, and when the blood would not flow freely, entered a warm bath and was finally suffocated.

It was Seneca's misfortune to have been connected with Nero. There is diversity of opinion as to his real character, and as to his influence on his pupil, but it is probable that his professions of virtue were sincere, and that he did the best for his pupil that could be done. He is accused of pandering to vice, and he certainly palliated it. His reputation was injured in his lifetime by his immense wealth. Yet he was an admirer and supporter of the old Roman faith and devotion to duty. He may fairly be regarded as "a good man in the direful grasp of ills." As he was a victim of Nero's cruelty, and also an advocate, in his writings, of a high morality, he came to be regarded among the Christians of the fourth century as a secret disciple of the new faith. St. Jerome was tempted to ascribe to Seneca a correspondence with St. Paul, consisting of fourteen letters. His genuine "Epistles to Lucilius" are serious and meditative, and rebuke the follies of his time. They probably belong to the latter part of his life. His other treatises, on Anger, on Tranquillity of Mind, on Clemency, on Providence, on the Happy Life, on Kindness, show that he had embraced the doctrines of the Stoics. They were formerly more read and admired than they are at present. His ten tragedies are examples of the dramatic literature which arose during the temporary revival of culture under Nero. These frigid imitations of the tragedies of Euripides show less of true dramatic genius than of skilful rhetoric. They became the models of French tragedy when brought forward by Corneille and Racine. Showy declamation, epigram and antithesis are their striking characteristics.

ANGER AND ITS REMEDIES.

THIS quaint translation is by Thomas Lodge (1556–1625), a dramatist, novelist and poet of Elizabeth's reign.

A good man rejoiceth when he is admonished; a wicked man cannot brook a reprover. At a banquet some men's bitter jests and intemperate words have touched thee to the quick: remember to avoid the vulgar company: after wine men's words are too lavish, and they that are most sober in their discourses are scarce modest. Thou sawest thy friends displeased with the porter of a counselor's chamber, or some rich man, because he would not suffer him to enter; and thou thyself, being angry for this cause, growest in choler with the cullion. Wilt thou therefore be angry with a chained dog, who when he hath barked much will be satisfied with a piece of bread?—get farther off him, and laugh. He that keepeth his master's door, and seeth the threshold besieged by a troop of solicitors, thinketh himself no small bug; and he that is the client thinketh himself happy in his own opinion, and believeth that so hard an access into the chamber is an evident testimony that the master of the same is a man of great quality and a favorite of fortune. But he remembereth not himself that the entry of a prison is as difficult likewise. Presume with thyself that thou art to endure much. If a man be cold in winter, if he vomit at sea, if he be shaken in a coach, shall he marvel hereat? The mind is strong, and many endure all that whereunto he is prepared. If thou hast been seated in a place scarce answerable to thine honor, thou hast been angry with him that stood next thee, or with him that invited thee, or with him that was preferred before thee. Fool as thou art, what matter is it in what place thou art set at the table?—a cushion cannot make thee more or less honorable. Thou wert displeased to see such a one, because he spake ill of thy behavior. By this reckoning, then, Ennius, in whose poetry thou art noways delighted, should hate thee, and Hortensius should denounce war against thee, and Cicero, if thou shouldst mock his verses, should be at odds with thee. When thou suest for an office, dost thou not peaceably entertain those that give their voices to the election, although they nominate not thyself?

Some man hath disgraced thee: what more than Diogenes the Stoic was, who, discoursing one day very effectually upon the subject of anger, was scornfully spat upon by a froward young man? This injury entertained he both mildly and wisely: "Truly (saith he), I am not angry, yet doubt I whether I ought to be angry." But our friend Cato demeaned himself better, whom, as he pleaded a cause, Lentulus, that factious and seditious fellow in the time of our forefathers, similarly insulted. For in wiping his face he said no other thing but this: "Truly, Lentulus, I will now maintain it against all men that they are deceived who say thou hast no mouth."

Now, my Novatus, we are already instructed how to govern our minds, either to feel not wrath, or be superiors over it. Let us now see how we may temper other men's ire; for not only desire we to be healthful ourselves, but to heal others. We dare not attempt to moderate and pacify the first anger by persuasion, for she is deaf and mad; we will give her some time: remedies are best in the declination of fevers. Neither will we attempt her when she is inflamed and in fury, for fear lest in striving to quench we enkindle the same. . . . To check him that is angry, and to oppose thyself against him, is to cast oil on the fire. Thou shalt attempt him divers ways, and after a friendly manner, except haply it be so great a personage that thou mayest diminish his wrath as Augustus Cæsar did when he supped with Vedius Pollio. One of the servants had broken a crystal glass, whom Vedius commanded to be carried away and to be punished by no ordinary death; for he commanded him to be thrown amongst his lampreys, which were kept in a great fish-pond. The boy escaped out of their hands, and fled to Cæsar's feet, desiring nothing else but that he might die otherwise, and not be made meat for fishes. Cæsar was moved with the novelty of the cruelty, and commanded him to be carried away, yet gave orders that all the crystal vessels should be broken in his presence, and that the fish-pond should be filled up. So thought Cæsar good to chastise his friend, and well did he use his power.

Commandest thou men to be dragged from the banquet and to be tortured by new kinds of punishment? If thy cup be broken, shall men's bowels be rent in pieces? Wilt thou please thyself so much as to command any man to death where Cæsar is present?

Let us give repose unto our minds, which we shall do if we dilate continually upon the precepts of wisdom and the acts of virtue, and likewise whilst our thoughts desire nothing but that which is honest. Let us satisfy our conscience; let us do nothing for vainglory's sake; let thy fortune be evil, so thine actions be good. But (sayest thou) the world admireth those that attempt mighty matters, and audacious men are reported honorable, and peaceable are esteemed sluggards. It may be, upon the first sight; but as soon as a well-governed mind showeth that it proceedeth not from the weakness, but the moderation, of the mind, the people regard and reverence it. So, then, this cruel and blood passion is not profitable in any sort, but contrariwise; all evils, fire and blood, feed her; she treadeth all modesty under foot, embrueth her hands with infinite murders; she it is that teareth children in sunder and scattereth their limbs here and there. She hath left no place void of heinous villanies, neither respecting glory nor fearing infamy; incurable, when of wrath she is hardened and converted into hatred.

JASON AND MEDEA.

SENECA'S tragedy of "Medea" follows the story as set forth in the "Medea" of Euripides. The following soliloquy and dialogue occurs after Creon, having accepted Jason as a son-in-law, has ordered Medea to depart from Corinth.

Jason [*alone*]. Still cruel fates! Fortune severe alike!
Equally bad, or if she spare or strike!
So often Heaven hath for our desp'rate woes
Found remedies more desperate than those.
If we the faith, to our wife's merits due,
Had kept, we must have died. Death to eschew,
We must be faithless; not to this inclined
By abject fear, but a paternal mind.
For in their parents' ruin our poor race

Would be involved. O justice! if a place
In Heaven thou hast, by thy white throne I swear
The children overcame their sire. Nor e'er
Shall I think other, but that she (though fierce
Of heart, and beyond all reclaim perverse),
Her children's lives would 'fore my bed desire.
With prayers we were resolved to accost her ire.
But see! she hath spied us; ill the sight she brooks,
Disdain and passion printed in her looks.
Medea. We fly! Jason, we fly! for us to change
Seats is not new; the cause is new and strange.
To whom dost send us? shall we Phasis flood,
Colchis and our sire's realms, or fields with blood
Of slaughtered brother stained, go seek? What lands,
What seas must we find out at thy commands?
The Pontic Straits? through which that princely train
We safe brought home; when through the incensed main
And dangerous Symplegades, we fled
With thee, now turned adulterer to our bed?
Shall we for small Iolcos make? or steer
Unto Thessalian Tempe? what ways e'er
To thee we opened, 'gainst ourselves we closed.
Then whither send ye us? to what lands exposed?
To exile, an exiled wretch is sent
And yet no place assigned for banishment.
Yet go we must, so to command seems fit
To Creon's son-in-law, and we submit.
Jas. When wrathful Creon sought thy life to have
Moved by our tears, for death he exile gave.
Med. We exile thought a punishment; but now
We find that for a favor you allow.
Jas. Whilst yet thou mayst, get thee from hence conveyed;
The wrath of kings is heavy.
Med. You persuade
This to endear you in Creusa's love;
You seek a hated strumpet to remove.
Jas. Objects Medea love?
Med. And treachery,
And murder too.
Jas. What crime is there, 'gainst me
Thou canst object, deserves so foul a blame?

Med. All that we ever did.
Jas. Then 'tis your aim
To involve us in the guilt of your misdeeds.
Med. Those, those are thine. He to whose gain succeeds
The ill, is the ill's author. Though our fame
All should oppose, thou ought'st defend the same,
And say we're blameless: who should guiltless be
In thy repute, is guilty made for thee.
Jas. That life's a burden, which enjoyed brings shame
Med. That life discharge, enjoyed with loss of fame.
Jas. Rather appease thy wrath-incensed breast,
For thy poor children's sakes;
Med. No, we detest,
Abjure the thought; what? shall Creusa live,
And brothers to Medea's children give?
Jas. 'Twill be an honor when our exiled race
A queen shall with her kindred issue grace.
Med. Come never so unfortunate a day
To the already wretched, with alloy
Of baser blood, to mix our noble line;
Phœbus with Sisyphus his offspring join.
Jas. Why seek'st thou ruin on us both to bring?
Let me entreat thee to depart.
Med. The king
Could yet vouchsafe to hear us speak.
Jas. Declare
What's in my power to do for thee.
Med. Me! dare
Any mischief.
Jas. On either hand, see here
Two potent kings.
Med. Than those a greater fear,
Behold Medea! let us exercise
Our powers, and Jason be the victor's prize.
Jas. Wearied with mysteries, I yield; forbear;
So often tried, the turn of fortune fear.
Med. Mistress of fortune we have ever been.
Jas. Acastus there; here Creon's nearer spleen
Threatens destruction.
Med. Void thou either's harms;
Not 'gainst thy father-in-law to rise in arms,

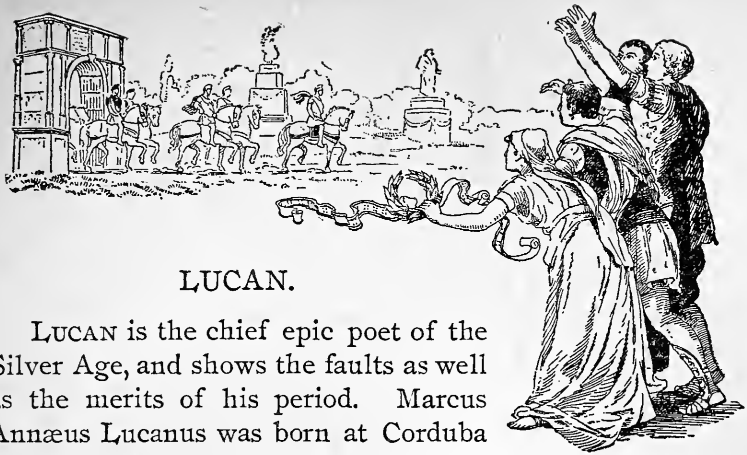
Or stain with kindred's blood thy innocence,
Medea will. Guiltless with her fly hence.
Jas. Who shall oppose, if they their powers combine,
And 'gainst us with united forces join?
Med. Add Colchians too; Æetes general:
Scythians with Grecians join; we'll foil them all.
Jas. I potent sceptres dread.
Med. Rather take heed
You affect them not.
Jas. Lest this our conference breed
Suspicion, let's cut short our long discourse.
Med. Now, Jove, o'er all the heavens thy thunder force,
Stretch forth thy hand, thy vengeful flames prepare,
And from cracked clouds the world with horror scare.
Nor with delib'rate aim level thy throw,
Take him or me: whiche'er of us the blow
Shall sink, will guilty fall; if at us cast,
Thy thunder cannot miss.
Jas. Resume at last
More sober thoughts, language more mild; if aught
In Creon's court, in exile may be thought
Easeful to thee, ask and the asked-for have.
Med. Thou know'st we can, and use with scorn to wave
The wealth of kings; we only wish we might
Our children have companions in our flight;
That in their bosoms we our tears may shed.
More sons thou mayst expect from thy new bed.
Jas. I must confess me willing to comply
With thy desires; forbid by piety.
Nor could I suffer this, though Creon's power
Should force me to it. For this alone implore
I life; of all my cares the only ease,
Sooner I could want breath, limbs, light, than these.
Med. (*aside*). Loves he his children so! 'tis well, we ha'it;
Now know we where to wound him—we hope yet
We may our last words in their mindful breasts
Implant. [*Aloud.*] Embrace; seems this a just request?
This too, we with our latest speech entreat,
What our rash grief hath uttered, you'd forget,
And a more favorable memory
Of us retain; all passions buried be.
Jas. All, all's forgot by us; and here we pray

Thou mayst the fervor of thy mind allay,
And gentle curb unto thy passions give.
Patience is misery's best lenitive. [*Exit.*
Med. Gone! is it e'en so? hast thou forgotten me?
And all my merits slipped from thy memory?
No; we will ne'er slip thence. (*To herself.*) Now mind
thy part;
Summon together all thy strength and art.
'Tis thy best use of ills to think there's none.

HIS PROPHECY OF AMERICA.

THE chorus in the tragedy of "Medea" laments the building of the Argo, the first ship, and tells the progress of discovery, ending with a prophecy of the New World.

What was the purchase of so bold
A voyage, but a fleece of gold;
And greater mischief than the sea,
Medea: fit the freight to be
Of the first ship? The passive main
Now yields, and does all laws sustain.
Nor the famed Argo, by the hand
Of Pallas built, by heroes manned,
Does now alone complain she's forced
To sea; each petty boat's now coursed
About the deep; no bound'ry stands,
New walls by towns in foreign lands
Are raised; the pervious world in its old
Place leaves nothing. Indians the cold
Araxis drink, the Elbe, and Rhine
The Persians. The age shall come, in fine
Of many years, wherein the main
Shall loose the universal chain;
And mighty tracts of land be shown,
To search of elder days unknown;
New worlds by some new Tiphys found,
Nor Thule be earth's farthest bound.



LUCAN.

Lucan is the chief epic poet of the Silver Age, and shows the faults as well as the merits of his period. Marcus Annæus Lucanus was born at Corduba (Cordova), in Spain, A.D. 38. He was a nephew of Seneca, by whose writings the education and literature of the time were considerably affected. Going to Rome, Lucan soon attracted the favorable notice of the Emperor Nero by the excellence of his poetry. By imperial favor he was appointed quæstor and made a member of the college of augurs. Although a thorough republican at heart, he was a court poet, and sang the praises of his royal master. But soon he imprudently engaged with the emperor in a contest for supremacy in poetical skill and gained the prize, but lost place and preferment. He was prohibited not only from reciting his poetry in public, but also from exercising his rhetorical power at the bar. The poet joined Piso's conspiracy for the assassination of the emperor. The plot was detected, Lucan received capital sentence, and was allowed to choose the manner of his death. He ordered the physicians to open the arteries in his legs and arms, and as life ebbed out, repeated his own verses describing the death of Cato's soldier: "So the warm blood at once from every part ran purple poison down."

Of the many works of Lucan, only one has been preserved, the "Pharsalia." This rhetorical epic abounds in beautiful descriptions. Scenes, characters, events and incidents of war are treated with great vigor, but in too much detail. The narrative begins with Cæsar's crossing of the Rubicon and is continued to the time when that hero leaps into the sea at Alexandria and reaches his fleet in safety.

Though Lucan probably inclined to Pompey's side, he describes the rival leaders with equal vigor.

The Rivals, Pompey and Cæsar.

The sword is now the umpire to decide,
And part what friendship knew not to divide.
'Twas hard, an empire of so vast a size
Could not for two ambitious minds suffice;
The peopled earth, and wide extended main,
Could furnish room for only one to reign.
When dying Julia [*] first forsook the light,
And Hymen's tapers sunk in endless night,
The tender ties of kindred-love were torn,
Forgotten all, and buried in her urn.
Oh! if her death had haply been delayed,
How might the daughter and the wife persuade!
Like the famed Sabine dames, she had been seen
To stay the meeting war, and stand between:
On either hand had wooed them to accord,
Soothed her fierce father, and her furious lord,
To join in peace, and sheathe the ruthless sword.
But this the fatal sisters' doom denied;
The friends were severed, when the matron died.
The rival leaders mortal war proclaim,
Rage fires their souls with jealousy of fame,
And emulation fans the rising flame.
Thee, Pompey, thy past deeds by turns infest,
And jealous glory burns within thy breast;
Thy famed piratic laurel [†] seems to fade
Beneath successful Cæsar's rising shade;
His Gallic wreaths thou viewest with anxious eyes
Above thy naval crowns triumphant rise.
Thee, Cæsar, thy long labors past incite,
Thy use of war, and custom of the fight;
While bold ambition prompts thee in the race,
And bids thy courage scorn a second place.

---

[*] Julia, the daughter of Julius Cæsar, was married to Pompey.

[†] Pompey had won his first great reputation by clearing the Mediterranean of the pirates who had infested it, but Cæsar acquired yet greater fame by his conquest of Gaul.

Superior power, fierce faction's dearest care,
One could not brook, and one disdained to share.
Justly to name the better cause were hard,
While greatest names for either side declared:
Victorious Cæsar by the gods was crowned,
The vanquished party was by Cato owned.
  Nor came the rivals equal to the field;
One to increasing years began to yield,
Old Age came creeping in the peaceful gown,
And civil functions weighed the soldier down;
Disused to arms, he turned him to the laws,
And pleased himself with popular applause;
With gifts and liberal bounty sought for fame,
And loved to hear the vulgar shout his name;
In his own theatre rejoiced to sit,
Amidst the noisy praises of the pit.
Careless of future ills that might betide,
No aid he sought to prop his failing side,
But on his former fortune much relied.
Still seemed he to possess and fill his place;
But stood the shadow of what once he was;
So in the field with Ceres' bounty spread,
Uprears some ancient oak his reverend head;
Chaplets and sacred gifts his boughs adorn,
And spoils of war by mighty heroes worn.
But the first vigor of his root now gone,
He stands dependent on his weight alone;
All bare his naked branches are displayed,
And with his leafless trunk he forms a shade:
Yet though the winds his ruin daily threat,
As every blast would heave him from his seat;
Though thousand fairer trees the field supplies,
That rich in youthful verdure round him rise;
Fixed in his ancient state he yields to none,
And wears the honors of the grove alone.
  But Cæsar's greatness, and his strength, was more
Than past renown and antiquated power;
'Twas not the fame of what he once had been,
Or tales in old records and annals seen;
But 'twas a valor, restless, unconfined,
Which no success could sate, nor limits bind;
'Twas shame, a soldier's shame, untaught to yield,

That blushed for nothing but an ill-fought field;
Fierce in his hopes he was, nor knew to stay,
Where vengeance or ambition led the way;
Still prodigal of war whene'er withstood,
Nor spared to stain the guilty sword with blood;
Urging advantage, he improved all odds,
And made the most of fortune and the gods;
Pleased to o'erturn whate'er withheld his prize,
And saw the ruin with rejoicing eyes.
Such while earth trembles and heaven thunders loud,
Darts the swift lightning from the rending cloud;
Fierce through the day it breaks, and in its flight
The dreadful blast confounds the gazer's sight;
Resistless in its course delights to rove,
And cleaves the temples of its master Jove:
Alike where'er it passes or returns,
With equal rage the fell destroyer burns;
Then with a whirl full in its strength retires,
And re-collects the force of all its scattered fires.

Cato Re-weds the Widow Martia.

Cato the Younger, great-grandson of Cato the Censor, and a man of like severe character, is said to have given his wife Martia, with her father's consent, to his friend Hortensius, who had been childless. After the death of Hortensius, Martia returns to her former husband.

Now 'gan the sun to lift his dawning light,
Before him fled the colder shades of night;
When lo! the sounding doors are heard to turn,
Chaste Martia comes from dead Hortensius' urn.
Once to a better husband's happier bed,
With bridal rites, a virgin was she led.
When every debt of love and duty paid,
And thrice a parent by Lucina made;
The teeming matron, at her lord's command,
To glad Hortensius gave her plighted hand;
With a fair stock his barren house to grace,
And mingle by the mother's side the race.
At length this husband in his ashes laid,
And every rite of due religion paid,
Forth from his monument the mournful dame,
With beaten breasts, and locks dishevelled, came;

Then with a pale, dejected, rueful look,
Thus pleasing, to her former lord she spoke.
"While nature yet with vigor fed my veins,
And made me equal to a mother's pains,
To thee obedient, I thy house forsook,
And to my arms another husband took:
My powers at length with genial labors worn,
Weary to thee and wasted I return.
At length a barren wedlock let me prove,
Give me the name, without the joys of love;
No more to be abandoned, let me come,
That "Cato's wife" may live upon my tomb.
Nor ask I now thy happiness to share,
I seek thy days of toil, thy nights of care:
Give me, with thee, to meet my country's foe,
Thy weary marches and thy camps to know;
Nor let posterity with shame record,
Cornelia* followed, Martia left, her lord.
She said. The hero's manly heart was moved,
And the chaste matron's virtuous suit approved.
And though the times far differing thoughts demand,
Though war dissents from Hymen's holy band;
In plain unsolemn wise his faith he plights,
And calls the gods to view the lonely rites.
No genial bed, with rich embroidery graced,
On ivory steps in lofty state was placed.
But, as she was, in funeral attire,
With all the sadness sorrow could inspire,
With eyes dejected, with a joyless face,
She met her husband's, like a son's, embrace.
No Sabine mirth provokes the bridegroom's ears,
Nor sprightly wit the glad assembly cheers.
No friends, nor e'en their children, grace the feast,
Brutus attends, their only nuptial guest:
He stands a witness of the silent rite,
And sees the melancholy pair unite.
Nor he, the chief, his sacred visage cheered,
Nor smoothed his matted locks or horrid beard;
Nor deigns his heart one thought of joy to know,
But met his Martia with the same stern brow.

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* The wife of Pompey.

(For when he saw the fatal factions arm,
The coming war, and Rome's impending harm;
Regardless quite of every other care,
Unshorn he left his loose neglected hair;
Rude hung the hoary honors of his head,
And a foul growth his mournful cheeks o'erspread.
No stings of private hate his peace infest,
Nor partial favor grew upon his breast;
But safe from prejudice, he kept his mind
Free, and at leisure to lament mankind.)
Nor could his former love's returning fire,
The warmth of one connubial wish inspire,
But strongly he withstood the just desire.
These were the stricter manners of the man,
And this the stubborn course in which they ran;
The golden mean unchanging to pursue,
Constant to keep the purposed end in view;
Religiously to follow nature's laws,
And die with pleasure in his country's cause.
He sought no end of marriage, but increase,
Nor wished a pleasure, but his country's peace:
That took up all the tenderest parts of life,
His country was his children and his wife.

CÆSAR IN THE STORM AT SEA.

JULIUS CÆSAR, after having crossed the Adriatic into Macedonia in pursuit of Pompey, wished to return to Italy without the knowledge of his army, and embarked alone on a tempestuous night.

The boatman spread his canvas to the wind,
Unmoor'd his skiff, and left the shore behind.
Swift flew the nimble keel; and, as they passed,
Long trails of light the shooting meteors cast;
E'en the fixed fires above in motion seem,
Shake through the blast, and dart a quiv'ring beam;
Black horrors on the gloomy ocean brood,
And in long ridges rolls the threat'ning flood;
While loud and louder murmuring winds arise,
And growl from every quarter of the skies.
When thus the trembling master, pale with fear,
Beholds what wrath the dreadful gods prepare;

"My art is at a loss; the various tide
Beats my unstable bark on every side:
From the northwest the setting current swells,
While southern storms the driving rack foretells.
Howe'er it be, our purposed way is lost,
Nor can one relic of our wreck be tossed
By winds, like these, on fair Hesperia's coast.
Our only means of safety is to yield,
And measure back with haste the foamy field;
To give our unsuccessful labor o'er,
And reach, while yet we may, the neighb'ring shore."
But Cæsar, still superior to distress,
Fearless, and confident of sure success,
Thus to the pilot loud—"The seas despise,
And the vain threat'ning of the noisy skies.
Though gods deny thee yon Ausonian strand;
Yet go, I charge thee—go at my command.
Thy ignorance alone can cause thy fears,
Thou know'st not what a freight thy vessel bears;
Thou know'st not I am he to whom 'tis given
Never to want the care of watchful Heaven.
Obedient Fortune waits my humble thrall,
And always ready comes before I call.
Let winds and seas loud wars at freedom wage,
And waste upon themselves their empty rage;
A stronger, mightier demon is thy friend,
Thou and thy bark on Cæsar's fate depend.
Thou stand'st amazed to view this dreadful scene;
And wonder'st what the gods and Fortune mean!
Thy keel, auspicious, shall the storm appease,
Shall glide triumphant o'er the calmer seas,
And reach Brundusium's safer port with ease.
Nor can the gods ordain another now,
'Tis what I want, and what they must bestow."
Thus while in vaunting words the leader spoke,
Full on his bark the thund'ring tempest struck;
Off rips the rending canvas from the mast,
And whirling flits before the driving blast;
In every joint the groaning alder sounds,
And gaps wide-opening with a thousand wounds.
Now, rising all at once, and unconfin'd,
From every quarter roars the rushing wind:

First, from the wide Atlantic Ocean's bed,
Tempestuous Corus rears his dreadful head;
The obedient deep his potent breath controls,
And, mountain-high, the foamy flood he rolls.
Him the North-East, encount'ring fierce, defied,
And back rebuffeted the yielding tide.
The curling surges loud conflicting meet,
Dash their proud heads, and bellow as they beat;
While piercing Boreas, from the Scythian strand,
Ploughs up the waves and scoops the lowest sand.
Nor Eurus then, I ween, was left to dwell,
Nor showery Notus in the Æolian cell;
But each from every side his power to boast,
Ranged his proud forces to defend his coast.
  Nor was that gloom the common shade of night,
The friendly darkness that relieves the light;
But fearful, black, and horrible to tell,
A murky vapor breathed from yawning hell:
So thick the mingling seas and clouds were hung,
Scarce could the struggling lightning gleam along.
Through nature's frame the dire convulsion strook,
Heaven groaned, the lab'ring pole and axis shook:
Uproar and chaos old prevailed again,
And broke the sacred elemental chain;
Black fiends, unhallowed, sought the best abodes,
Profaned the day and mingled with the gods.
  At length the universal wreck appeared
To Cæsar's self e'en, worthy to be feared.
"Why all these pains, this toil of fate (he cries),
This labor of the seas, and earth and skies?
All nature and the gods at once alarmed,
Against my little boat and me are armed.
If, O ye powers divine! your will decrees
The glory of my death to these rude seas;
If warm, and in the fighting field to die,
If that, my first of wishes, you deny;
My soul no longer at her lot repines,
But yields to what your providence assigns;
Though immature I end my glorious days,
Cut short my conquest, and prevent new praise;
My life, already, stands the noblest theme,
To fill long annals of recording fame.

Far northern nations own me for their lord,
And envious factions crouch beneath my sword;
Inferior Pompey yields to me at home,
And only fills a second place in Rome.
My country has my high behests obeyed,
And at my feet her laws obedient laid;
All sov'reignty, all honors are my own,
Consul, dictator, I am all alone.
But thou, my only goddess and my friend,
Thou on whom all my secret prayers attend,
Conceal, O Fortune! this inglorious end.
Let none on earth, let none beside thee know,
I sunk thus poorly to the shades below.
Dispose, ye gods! my carcass as you please,
Deep let it drown beneath these raging seas;
I ask no urn my ashes to unfold,
Nor marble monuments, nor shrines of gold;
Let but the world, unknowing of my doom,
Expect me still and think I am to come;
So shall my name with terror still be heard,
And my return in every nation fear'd."
He spoke, and sudden, wondrous to behold,
High on a tenth huge wave his bark was rolled;
Nor sunk again, alternate, as before,
But rushing, lodg'd, and fix'd upon the shore.
Rome and his fortune were at once restored,
And earth at once received him for her lord.

PETRONIUS ARBITER.

THE author of the famous "Satiræ," or "Satiricon," has been fairly identified with Petronius Arbiter, a master of revels of Nero's court. He won for himself the title "Arbiter Elegantiæ" by being the absolute authority on questions of taste in connection with the science of luxurious living. Tacitus in his "Annals" (Book XVI., chapters 18, 19) has drawn his portrait with a keen appreciation of his artistic nature, and yet in necessarily sombre colors. Petronius, says Professor Sellar, seems to have been possessed "of an easy, careless power, and a spirit which, if not courage in a good sense, was yet indifferent to death and capable of meeting calamity with Epicurean irony." He became Nero's most favored—at least, most desired—intimate; he spent his days in sleep and nights in dissipation; he was famous as an accomplished voluptuary. Nevertheless under this surface of dissolute character lay traits of the strongest fibre. He once served as a provincial governor, and again as a consul, and in each case acquitted himself with notable vigor. Knowing that Nero brooked no rivals near his throne, and that both Lucan with his "Pharsalia," and Seneca with his tragedies, were the objects of Nero's jealousy, Petronius may have resigned himself with Epicurean irony to the situation, and sought only to remain a courtier of supreme influence in Nero's imperial grace. There is very good reason to believe that his artistic sensibility was constantly shocked by Nero's atrocious vanities in art, music and poetry, and in the "Satiræ" occurs an episode of a poet stoned by the mob for reciting wofully bad doggerel on the theme of Troy, which apparently was intended as a dig at Cæsar. So nice was Petronius's affection for art that before his death (so says Pliny the Elder) he shattered a myrrhine vase of rare value in order to prevent it from falling into the hands of Nero. On the other hand, he may have committed this act of art iconoclasm in a spirit of pique at the all-powerful ruler, who had condemned him to death. The "Satiræ" may have been written for no other purpose than to amuse Nero with mimicry of the poets, artists, and vulgar rich freedmen around him, and they certainly reveal no such righteous rage as Juvenal's, or even such resigned satire as Martial's. Nero is certainly not satirized in the portrait of Trimalchio, whose prototype in real life M. Gaston Paris very plausibly judges to have been Pallas, the freedman of Claudius. And yet it is not too much to assume that Petronius wrote this remarkable work in a vein of Epicurean irony, of cynical humor. There remain only fragments of what was professedly a long novel, so to speak. A portion of even this was not discovered until the middle of the seventeenth century, in Paris (1664). There is no morality in this work of immoral sensualism, but it exhibits an admirable taste and brave cynicism, such as was displaced by Petronius in his enforced death. He had his veins opened and rebound again, thus prolonging a lingering departure during which he conversed not at all on serious matters, but listened, declares Tacitus, only to "lewd songs and light verses." Henryk Sienkiewicz, the Polish novelist, has made Petronius the central figure of his powerful and vivid romance, "Quo Vadis," and the above is his view of the Arbiter. Sienkiewicz has depicted him, no doubt, in excessively ideal colors, and given him much more tenderness of character than he really possessed, and yet he "has for the most part simply put color to Tacitus's marble." In this romance the disgrace of Petronius is connected with Nero's burning of Rome, and Petronius's attempt to save the Christians, on whom Tigellinus would fasten the blame.

Of the Satiræ it has been said that "perhaps next to a day spent amid the ruins of Pompeii nothing else makes us feel so near the actual daily life of Rome in the first century A.D. as this fragment." Petronius was not only the most truly humorous of all the Latin writers, but he was a master of characterization. He took, therefore, the old Roman Satura, or miscellany (mixed verse and prose), and created a new thing—the novel based on ordinary experience and contemporary life. He may be regarded even as a precursor of Cervantes and Lesage. While he invented no actual plot, his work is a series of adventures befalling the moody philosopher, Encolpius. Besides the licentious adventures with Ascyltos and the boy Giton and with the fortune-hunters of Crotona, it includes the celebrated episode of the Matron of Ephesus. The great feature of the fragments is the "Cœna Trimalchionis," the Banquet of Trimalchio. Although primarily a humorous satire on Neronic table-gluttony and the grotesque ostentation of the illiterate rich of Nero's day, with their retinue of "Cappadocian knights," this masterpiece still remains applicable in part as a satire on the "new rich" and the vulgar great of every generation.

Witty and obscene, the style of this work, prose and verse, is "the purest Latin of the Silver Age." Petronius invented the phrase "Horatii curiosa felicitas," and he himself produces many verbal felicities, as "woven wind." He speaks delightfully on art, music and poetry, and Sidonius Apollinaris ranked him with Cicero, Livy and Virgil, as one of the masters of Latin eloquence. In saying farewell to him we must re-echo Cowper's lament:

> Petronius, all the Muses weep for thee,
> But every tear doth scald thy memory!

THE BANQUET OF TRIMALCHIO.

A MAGNIFICENT first course was served up, for we were all reclined except Trimalchio, for whom, after a new fashion, the chief place was reserved. On the table stood an ass in Corinthian metal, with two panniers containing olives, white on one side, black on the other; and flanked by two silver dishes, on the borders of which was engraved Trimalchio's name with the weight of metal in each. There were also little salvers in the shape of bridges, on which were laid dormice strewed over with honey and poppy seed; and smoking-hot sausages on a silver gridiron, beneath which, representing black and live coals, lay plums and pomegranate grains.

We were in the midst of these dainties when Trimalchio himself was ushered in with a flourish of music, and was bolstered up on his couch with a number of little pillows, which set some indiscreet persons among us a-laughing. And well they might, for his shaven pate poked out of a scarlet mantle, which loaded his neck, and over the mantle he had put a napkin adorned with a purple border, with fringes that hung on either side. He had also a large gilded ring on the little finger of his left hand, and on the last joint of the finger next it a smaller ring that seemed of pure gold, but starred with steel. And to let us see that these were not the whole of his bravery, he stripped his right arm, which was adorned with a golden bracelet, and an ivory circle fastened with a glistening plate of gold.

Picking his teeth with a silver pin, "My friends," said he, "I had no mind to come yet to table; but lest my absence should keep you waiting, I deprived myself of my amusement. You will allow me, however, to finish my game."

A boy followed him with a draught-board of juniper wood and crystal dice; and I noticed one surpassing piece of luxury, for instead of black and white pieces he had medals of silver and gold. Meantime, whilst he was sweeping off his adversary's pieces, and we were still engaged with the first course, a machine was handed in with a basket on it, in which sat a hen carved of wood, her wings lying round and hollowed as if she was brooding. The musicians struck up, and two servants began immediately to search the straw under the hen, and drawing forth some peafowl's eggs distributed them among the guests.

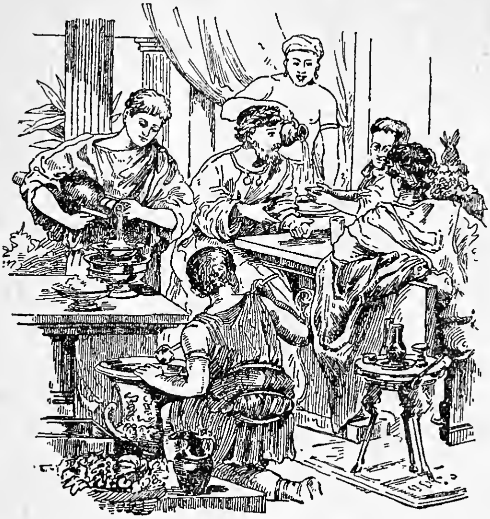
At this Trimalchio turned towards us and said, "My friends, I gave orders that this hen should be set upon peafowl's eggs, but, by Hercules, I am afraid they are half hatched. However, we will try if they are yet eatable."

We took our spoons, each of which weighed at least half a pound, and began to break our paste eggs. For my part I had like to have thrown mine away, for it seemed to me to have a chicken in it; but hearing an old guest say, "There must be something good in this," I continued my search, and found a fine fat beccafico surrounded with yolk of egg, seasoned with pepper.

Trimalchio, having now left off his play, had been helped to everything on the table, and announced in a loud voice that if any one wished for more honeyed wine he might have it. The signal was given by the music, and the first course was removed by a company of singers; but a dish falling in the hurry, a servant took it up, which Trimalchio observing, boxed his ears and ordered him to throw it down again; and presently came the groom of the chambers with his broom, and swept away the silver dish with the rest of the litter.

He was followed immediately by two long-haired Ethiopians, with small leather bottles, such as are used for sprinkling the arena of the amphitheatre; and they poured wine on our hands, for no one offered us water. The master of the house, having been complimented on this piece of elegance, cried out, "Man is a lover of fair play." Then the old fellow gave orders that every man should have his own table; and, continued he, "We shall be less incommoded by heat when we are no longer crowded upon by these stinking servants."

At the same time there were brought in glass jars, close stopped with plaster, and with labels round their necks, on which was written. "Opimian Falernian, a hundred years old." Whilst we were reading the labels, Trimalchio ejaculated, "O dear! O dear! to think that wine should be longer-lived than we poor manikins. Well, since it is so let us e'en drink till we can hold no more. There's life in wine. This is genuine Opimian, you may take my word for it. I did not put so good on my table yesterday, and I had much more respectable men than you to dine with me."



So we drank our wine, and mightily extolled all the fine things set before us; when in came a servant with a silver skeleton, so artfully put together that its joints and backbone turned every way. Having cast it a few times on the table, and made it assume various postures, Trimalchio cried out,

Vain as vanity are we!
  Swift life's transient flames decay!
What this is, we soon shall be;
  Then be merry whilst you may.

The applause we gave him was followed by the second course, which certainly did not come up to our expectation; yet the novelty of the thing drew every one's eyes upon it. It was a large circular tray with the twelve signs of the zodiac round it, upon every one of which the arranger had put an appropriate dish: on Aries ram's-head pies; on Taurus a piece of roast beef; on Gemini kidneys and lamb's fry; on Cancer a crown; on Leo African figs; on Virgo a young sow's haslet; on Libra a pair of scales, in one of which were tarts, in the other cheese-cakes; on Scorpio a little sea-fish of the same name; on Sagittarius a hare; on Capricorn a lobster; on Aquarius a goose; on Pisces two mullets; and in the middle there was a green turf, on which lay a honeycomb.

Meanwhile an Egyptian slave carried bread in a silver portable oven, singing at the same time in a very delicate voice a song in praise of wine flavored with rare herbs. But as we looked rather blank at the coarse fare before us, Trimalchio cried out, "Pray, gentleman, fall to: you see your dinner."

As he spoke, four fellows came dancing in to the sound of music, and took off the upper part of the tray; which being done, we saw beneath on a second tray crammed fowls, a sow's paps, and in the middle a hare fitted with wings to resemble Pegasus. We also remarked four figures of Marsyas standing at the several corners, and spouting a highly-seasoned sauce on some fish that swam in a very Euripus.

We all joined in the admiring exclamations begun by the domestics, and merrily fell to at what each liked best. "Cut!" said Trimalchio, who was not less delighted than ourselves with a device of the sort; and forth stepped the carver and began to cut up the meat, keeping time with the music, and with such antic gestures, you would have thought he was exerting himself to the sound of a hydraulic organ to win a chariot race.

Trimalchio nevertheless went on calling out, Cut, from time to time, in a low voice. Hearing the word so often repeated, I fancied there must be some joke connected with it, and therefore ventured to ask the guest who sat next above me what it meant. As he had often been present at these fooleries he replied, "Do you see that servant who is carving? His name is Cut; and therefore as often as Trimalchio cries Cut, he both calls and commands."

Not being able to eat any more, I turned to the same person to satisfy my curiosity in other particulars; and after leading the way with some pleasantries, "What woman is that," said I, "who is bustling about the room?"

"She is Trimalchio's wife," he replied, "her name is Fortunata, she counts her money by the bushel. As for what she was a little while ago, saving your favor, you would have been loth to take bread out of her hand; but now, no one knows why or wherefore she has got into heaven, as it were, and is Trimalchio's factotum: in short, if she says it is midnight at high noon he will believe her. He cannot tell his riches, he is so excessively wealthy; but this high-born lady has an eye to everything, and when you think least to meet her she is at your elbow. She drinks little, she is sober and a good adviser; but she has an ugly tongue, and in bed chatters like a magpie. If she like a body she likes him, and if she dislikes him she dislikes him in good earnest.

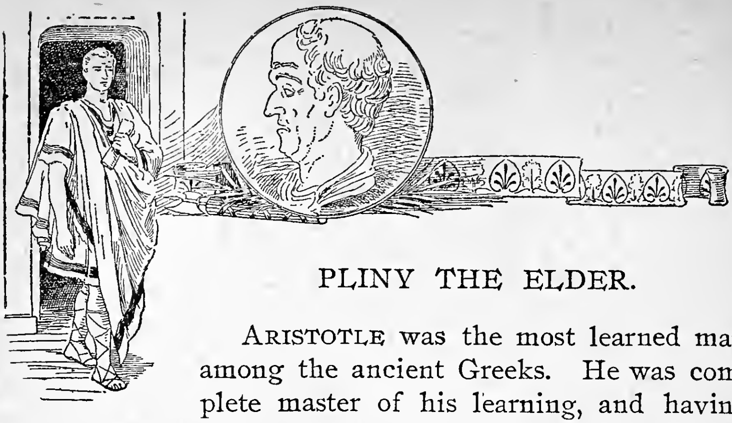
"As for Trimalchio, he has as much land as a kite can fly over; he has heaps upon heaps of money. There is more silver lying in his porter's lodge than another man's whole estate is worth. And as for his slaves, wheugh! by Hercules, I do not believe one-tenth of them know their own master, and they stand in such awe of him that he could make every dolt of them creep into a gimlet-hole. You must not imagine that he buys anything; he has all within himself, wool, chalk, pepper, nay, if you have a mind for hen's milk you'll get it. At first, I grant you, his wool was none of the best, for which reason he bought rams at Tarentum to improve his breed; he had bees fetched from Athens, that he might have Attic honey home-made; and that at the same time the native bees might be bettered by a cross with the Greek. It was only the other day he wrote to India for mushroom-seed; and he has not a single mule but was got by a wild ass. You see all these beds? There is not one of them but is wadded with the finest purple or scarlet wool. Oh, what a happy man he is!

"And don't turn up your nose at any of his fellow freedmen, mind you. They are very snug fellows. You see that one at the end there to the right? He is worth this moment his eight hundred thousand. Yet he began the world with nothing; it is not long since he used to carry wood on his back. They do say, but I don't know how true it may be, I only speak from hearsay, that he snatched off an Incubo's hat, and so found a treasure. For my part, I envy no man; if any god has stood his friend, well and good. He can still take a box on the ear for all that; he knows on which side his bread is buttered.

"But what think you of him you see in the freedman's place? How well off he was once! I don't upbraid him. He saw his money increase tenfold, but he went wrong at last. I don't suppose he has a hair on his head that is not mortgaged; though, by Hercules, it was not his fault, for there is not a better man living, but his rascally freedmen's, who choused him out of all. Let me tell you, when the pot no longer boils, and a man's fortune declines, farewell friends. And what was the handsome occupation he followed that you see him where he is? Why he was an undertaker. He used to keep a table like a king's—boars fed on Carian figs, huge pies, wild-fowl, stags—his cooks and pastry-cooks spilled more wine under the table than another man has in his cellar: it was more a dream of fancy than the life of a mortal man."

Trimalchio interrupted this pleasant chat; for the course had been removed, and as the company, now warm with wine, were beginning to engage in general conversation, he leaned on his elbow and said, "Pray commend this wine by your drinking; you must make your fish swim again. Do you imagine I can be content with such a supper as you saw just now boxed up as it were in a tray? 'Is Ulysses no better known?' Eh, what say you? Even at table we must remember our philology [classical learning].

"Peace to the bones of my good patron! It was his pleasure to make me a man among men. Nothing can come across me that is new to me, just as it was with him, whereof this tray supplies practical proof."



PLINY THE ELDER.

Aristotle was the most learned man among the ancient Greeks. He was complete master of his learning, and having thoroughly digested and systematized his immense collection of observations, was able to appraise their true value, and to direct others to their proper use. Pliny the Elder was the most learned man among the Romans, but was mastered by his own learning. Unable to classify it properly or to fix its real value, he bequeathed to posterity a vast accumulation of miscellaneous information, in which important facts and worthless rubbish were mixed indiscriminately. Yet the huge piles of his multifarious gathering deeply impressed the imagination of his unlearned successors, and for a long time he was quoted with the reverence due to a master mind. Not only while the writings of Aristotle were lost, but for centuries after they were recovered, Pliny's "Natural History" was the standard encyclopædia of the world. The explanation of his influence lies partly in his credulity, which easily accepted extravagant statements of all sorts, and found ready echo among the later barbarians, who had acquired by conquest a material wealth and civilization which filled them with amazement. Not understanding what they saw, they were ready to believe any marvels.

Caius Plinius Secundus, to give him his classical designation, was born at Comum, now Como, in Northern Italy, in 23 A.D. At the age of sixteen he was studying at Rome under the Egyptian Apion. In early manhood he commanded a troop of cavalry under Pomponius in Germany, and his first treatise was on the "Art of Throwing the Javelin on Horseback," He returned to Rome to practice law, but was soon engaged in writing a biography of Pomponius, and a "History of the Wars in Germany." Under Nero he was made administrator of the revenues of Spain, and held this position until his friend Titus became emperor. Meantime this indefatigable writer composed a "History of His Own Times," and concluded his "Natural History," on which he had long been engaged, and which is the enduring monument of his peculiar fame. Pliny was now made prefect of the Roman fleet, having charge of the western Mediterranean. He was stationed near Naples when, in 79 A.D., the memorable eruption of Vesuvius took place, which buried Herculaneum and Pompeii. His zeal as a student of natural phenomena led him to expose himself to danger, and he perished in the catastrophe.

Out of the numerous works of this industrious writer the "Natural History" alone remains. It comprises thirty-seven books, and treats of everything in heaven and earth, from the nature of the Deity to the rotation of crops, and the best test for good eggs. Morals, medicine and the fine arts are discussed in his hap-hazard way, and he has preserved much information of the manners and customs of the ancient world. He was devoid of humor and full of prejudice, yet retained much of antique Roman virtue in a luxurious age.

THE QUALITIES OF THE DOG.

AMONG the animals that are domesticated with mankind there are many circumstances that are deserving of being known: among these there are more particularly that most faithful friend of man, the dog, and the horse. We have an account of a dog that fought against a band of robbers in defending its master; and although it was pierced with wounds, still it would not leave the body, from which it drove away all birds and beasts. Another dog, in Epirus, recognized the murderer of its master in the midst of an assemblage of people, and, by biting and barking at him, extorted from him a confession of his crime. A king of the Garamantes, also, was brought back from exile by two hundred dogs, which maintained the combat against all his opponents. The people of Colophon and Castabala kept troops of dogs for the purposes of war; and these used to fight in the front rank and never retreat; they were the most faithful of auxiliaries, and yet required no pay. After the defeat of the Cimbri their dogs defended their movable houses, which were carried upon wagons. Jason, the Lycian, having been slain, his dog refused to take food, and died of famine. A dog, to which Darius gives the name of Hyrcanus, upon the funeral pile of King Lysimachus being lighted, threw itself into the flames; and the dog of King Hiero did the same. Philistus also gives a similar account of Pyrrhus, the dog of the tyrant Gelon; and it is said, also, that the dog of Nicomedes, King of Bithynia, tore Consingis, the wife of that king, in consequence of her wanton behavior, when toying with her husband.

Dogs are the only animals that are sure to know their masters, and if they suddenly meet him as a stranger, they will instantly recognize him. They are the only animals that will answer to their names, and recognize the voices of the family. They recollect a road along which they have passed, however long it may be. Next to man there is no living creature whose memory is so retentive. By sitting down on the ground we may arrest their most impetuous attack, even when prompted by the most violent rage.

In daily life we have discovered many other valuable qualities in this animal; but its intelligence and sagacity are more especially shown in the chase. It discovers and traces out the tracks of the animal, leading by the leash the sportsman who accompanies it straight up to the prey; and as soon as ever it has perceived it, how silent it is, and how secret but significant is the indication which it gives, first by the tail and afterwards by the nose!

When Alexander the Great was on his Indian expedition, he was presented by the King of Albania with a dog of unusual size; being greatly delighted with its noble appearance, he ordered bears, and after them wild boars, and then deer, to be let loose before it; but the dog lay down and regarded them with a kind of immovable contempt. The noble spirit of the general became irritated by the sluggishness thus manifested by an animal of such vast bulk, and he ordered it to be killed. The report of this reached the king, who accordingly sent another dog, and at the same time sent word that its powers were to be tried, not upon small animals, but upon the lion or the elephant; adding, that he had originally but two, and that if this one were put to death, the race would be extinct. Alexander, without delay, procured a lion, which in his presence was instantly torn to pieces. He then ordered an elephant to be brought, and never was he more delighted with any spectacle; for the dog, bristling up its hair all over the body, began by thundering forth a loud barking, and then attacked the animal, leaping at it first on the one side and then on the other, attacking it in the most skilful manner, and then again retreating at the opportune moment, until at last the elephant, being rendered quite giddy by turning round and round, fell to the earth, and made it quite re-echo with his fall.

THE EVIL EYE.

THERE are some persons who have the power of fascination with the eyes, and can even kill those on whom they fix their gaze for any length of time, more especially if their look denotes anger. A still more remarkable circumstance is the fact that these persons have two pupils in each eye. Apollonides says there are certain females of this description in Scythia; and Phylarchus states that a tribe of the Thibii in Pontus, and many other persons as well, have a double pupil in one eye, and in the other the figure of a horse. He also remarks that the bodies of these persons will not sink in water, even though weighed down with their garments.

Damon gives an account of a race of people not very much unlike them, whose perspiration is productive of consumption to the body of any other person that it touches. Cicero, also, one of our own writers, makes the remark that the glance of all women who have a double pupil is noxious.

A FISH THAT CAN STOP A SHIP.

WE have now arrived at the culminating point of the wonders manifested to us by the operations of Nature. And even at the very outset, we find spontaneously presented to us an incomparable illustration of her mysterious powers: so much so, in fact, that beyond it we feel ourselves bound to forbear extending our inquiries, there being nothing to be found either equal or analogous to an element in which Nature quite triumphs over herself, and that, too, in such numberless ways. For what is there more unruly than the sea, with its winds, its tornadoes, and its tempests? And yet in what department of her works has Nature been more seconded by the ingenuity of man, than in this, by his inventions of sails and of oars? In addition to this, we are struck with the ineffable might displayed by the Ocean's tides, as they constantly ebb and flow, and so regulate the currents of the sea as though they were the waters of one vast river.

And yet all these forces, though acting in unison, and impelling in the same direction, a single fish, and that of a very diminutive size—the fish known as the "echeneïs"—possesses the power of counteracting. Winds may blow and storms may rage, and yet the echeneïs controls their fury, restrains their mighty force, and bids ships stand still in their career; a result which no cables, no anchors, from their ponderousness quite incapable of being weighed, could ever have produced! A fish bridles the impetuous violence of the deep, and subdues the frantic rage of the universe—and all this by no effort of its own, no act of resistance on its part, no act at all, in fact, but that of adhering to the bark! Trifling as this object would appear, it suffices to counteract all these forces combined, and to forbid the ship to pass onward in its way! Fleets, armed for war, pile up towers and bulwarks on their decks, in order that, even upon the deep, men may fight from behind ramparts as it were. But alas for human vanity!—when their prows, beaked with brass and iron, and armed for the onset, can thus be arrested and riveted to the spot by a little fish, no more than half a foot in length!

At the battle of Actium, it is said, a fish of this kind stopped the prætorian ship of Antony in its course, at the moment that he was hastening from ship to ship to encourage and exhort his men, and so compelled him to leave it and go on board another. Hence it was, that the fleet of Cæsar [Octavianus] gained the advantage in the onset, and charged with a redoubled impetuosity. In our own time, too, one of these fish arrested the ship of the Emperor Caius [Caligula] in its course, when he was returning from Astura to Antium: and thus, as the result proved, did an insignificant fish give presage of great events; for no sooner had the emperor returned to Rome than he was pierced by the weapons of his own soldiers. Nor did this sudden stoppage of the ship long remain a mystery, the cause being perceived upon finding that, out of the whole fleet, the emperor's five-banked galley was the only one that was making no way. The moment this was discovered, some of the sailors plunged into the sea, and, on making search about the ship's sides, they found an echeneïs adhering to the rudder. Upon its being shown to the emperor, he strongly expressed his indignation that such an obstacle as this should have impeded his progress, and have rendered powerless the hearty endeavors of some four hundred men. One thing, too, it is well known, more particularly surprised him, how it was possible that the fish, while adhering to the ship, should arrest it progress, and yet should have no such power when brought on board.

The Painter Apelles.

Apelles, of Cos, surpassed all the other painters who either preceded or succeeded him. Single-handed, he contributed more to painting than all the others together, and even went so far as to publish some treatises on the principles of the art. The great point of artistic merit with him was his singular charm of gracefulness, and this too, though the greatest of painters were his contemporaries. In admiring their works and bestowing high eulogiums upon them, he used to say that there was still wanting in them that ideal of beauty so peculiar to himself, and known to the Greeks as "Charis;" others, he said, had acquired all the other requisites of perfection, but in this one point he himself had no equal. He also asserted his claim to another great point of merit: admiring a picture by Protogenes, which bore evident marks of unbounded laboriousness and the most minute finish, he remarked that in every respect Protogenes was fully his equal, or perhaps his superior, except in this, that he himself knew when to take his hand off a picture,—a memorable lesson, which teaches us that over-carefulness may be productive of bad results. His candor too, was equal to his talent; he acknowledged the superiority of Melanthius in his grouping, and of Asclepiodorus in the niceness of his measurements, or, in other words, the distances that ought to be left between the objects represented.

A circumstance that happened to him in connection with Protogenes is worthy of notice. The latter was living at Rhodes, when Apelles disembarked there, desirous of seeing the works of a man whom he had hitherto only known by reputation. Accordingly, he repaired at once to the studio; Protogenes was not at home, but there happened to be a large panel upon the easel ready for painting, with an old woman who was left in charge. To his inquiries she made answer, that Protogenes was not at home, and then asked whom she should name as the visitor, "Here he is," was the reply of Apelles, and seizing a brush, he traced with color upon the panel an outline of a singularly minute fineness. Upon his return, the old woman mentioned to Protogenes what had happened. The artist, it is said, upon remarking the delicacy of the touch, instantly exclaimed that Apelles must have been the visitor, for that no other person was capable of executing anything so exquisitely perfect. So saying, he traced within the same outline a still finer outline, but with another color, and then took his departure, with instructions to the woman to show it to the stranger, if he returned, and to let him know that this was the person whom he had come to see. It happened as he anticipated; Apelles returned, and vexed at finding himself thus surpassed, took up another color and drew between both outlines, leaving no possibility of anything finer being executed. Upon seeing this, Protogenes admitted that he was defeated, and at once flew to the harbor to look for his guest. He thought proper, too, to transmit the panel to posterity, just as it was, and it always continued to be held in the highest admiration by all, artists in particular. I am told that it was burnt in the first fire which took place at Cæsar's palace on the Palatine Hill; but in former times I have often stopped to admire it. Upon its vast surface it contained nothing whatever except the three outlines, so remarkably fine as to escape the sight: among the most elaborate works of numerous other artists it had all the appearance of a blank space; and yet by that very fact it attracted the notice of every one, and was held in higher estimation than any other painting there.

It was a custom with Apelles, to which he most tenaciously adhered, never to let any day pass, however busy he might be, without exercising himself by tracing some outline or other; a practice which has now passed into a proverb.* It was also a practice with him, when he had completed a work, to exhibit it to the view of the passers-by in some exposed place; while he himself, concealed behind the picture, would listen to the criticisms that were passed upon it; it being his opinion that the judgment of the public was preferable to his own, as being the more discerning of the two. It was under these circumstances, they say, that he was censured by a shoemaker for having represented the shoes with one shoe-string too little. The next day, the shoemaker, quite proud at seeing the former error corrected, thanks to his advice, began to criticize the leg; upon which Apelles, full of indignation, popped his head out, and reminded him that a shoemaker should give no opinion beyond the shoes, a piece of advice which has equally passed into a proverb.†

MARTIAL.

EPIGRAM, which had long flourished in the Greek language, was thoroughly naturalized in Latin, even before the time of Martial, but to him it chiefly owes its fame. Before his time the word epigram implied nothing more than a brief verse suitable for an inscription, but he added the sting or point, which henceforth became its characteristic.

Marcus Valerius Martialis was born at Bilbilis, in Spain, in 43 A.D. He tells us that his parents foolishly gave him a literary education. At Rome he lived in lodgings, up three flights of stairs; but, like Horace, he had also his "Sabine farm," the dimensions of which he humorously indicates by informing us that a cucumber could not lie straight on it. Yet the light-hearted poet tickled the public fancy till he had composed not less than 1,500 "Epigrams." Collected in fourteen books they have won universal fame. Martial is a keen satirist as well as a happy epigrammatist. Bores, whether literary or social, were his lawful prey: foibles, eccentricities, or extravagance of dress or manner were the objects of his attacks; and he spared nothing in the shape of affectation or hypocrisy. In his lighter verses, written merely to amuse, are found exquisite flights of fancy, brilliancy of description and graceful elegance. But Martial is censured for gross indecency, and the charge cannot be denied, though the poor excuse may be offered that he only complied with the perverted taste of his age. He himself declared, "Our page is wanton, but our life correct."

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* *Nulla dies sine linea.* "No day without a line."

† *Ne sutor ultra crepidam.* "Let the shoemaker stick to his last."

Martial's domestic life in Rome seems to have been a chronic genteel poverty, though he had the Emperor Domitian as his patron. After thirty-four years, he yearned to revisit the scenes of his youth and taste again the bliss of rural quiet and felicity. His desire was gratified, but he found to his dismay that the magnetism of Roman society still drew him towards the city. He was fortunate enough, however, to secure in marriage the hand of a handsome young Spanish lady, who he says compensated for all. Through his wife's devotion and modest little fortune, he was enabled to end his days in comfort and peace, A.D. 104.

ARRIA AND PÆTUS.

WHEN from her breast chaste Arria snatched the sword,
And gave the deathful weapon to her lord,
"My wound," she said, "believe me, does not smart;
But thine alone, my Pætus, pains my heart."

NOT AT HOME.

MAY I not live, but, were it in my power,
With thee I'd pass both day and night each hour.

Two miles I go to see you; and two more
When I return; and two and two make four.
Often denied; often from home you're gone:
Are busy oft; and oft would be alone.
Two miles, to see you, give me no great pain:
Four, not to see you, go against the grain.

THE PRETTY GENIUS.

Yes, you're a pretty preacher, sir, we know it;
Write pretty novels, are a pretty poet;
A pretty critic, and tell fortunes too;
Then, who writes farce or epigrams like you?
At every ball how prettily you nick it!
You fiddle, sing, play prettily at cricket.
Yet, after all, in nothing you excel,
Do all things prettily, but nothing well.
What shall I call you? say the best I can,
You are, my friend, a very busy man.

CHLOE.

I could resign that eye of blue,
  Howe'er its splendor used to thrill me;
And ev'n that cheek of roseate hue—
  To lose it, Chloe, scarce would kill me.

That snowy neck I ne'er should miss,
  However much I've raved about it;
And sweetly as that lip can kiss,
  I *think* I could exist without it.

In short, so well I've learned to fast,
  That sooth, my love, I know not whether
I might not bring myself at last
  —To do without you altogether.

THE ONLY SURE WEALTH.

Your slave will with your gold abscond,
  The fire your home lay low,
Your debtor will disown his bond,
  Your farm no crops bestow:

Your steward a mistress frail shall cheat;
Your freighted ship the storms will beat;
That only from mischance you'll save,
  Which to your friends is given;
The only wealth you'll always have
  Is that you've lent to heaven.

CHLOE'S KISSES.

COME, Chloe, and give me sweet kisses,
  For sweeter sure girl never gave;
But why, in the midst of my blisses,
  Do you ask me how many I'd have?

I'm not to be stinted in pleasure,
  Then, prithee, my charmer, be kind,
For, while I love thee above measure,
  To numbers I'll ne'er be confined.

Count the bees that on Hybla are playing;
  Count the flowers that enamel its fields;
Count the flocks that on Tempe are straying;
  Or the grain that rich Sicily yields.

Go, number the stars in the heaven;
  Count how many sands on the shore;
When so many kisses you've given,
  I still shall be craving for more.

To a heart full of love let me hold thee,
  To a heart, which, dear Chloe, is thine;
With my arms I'll forever enfold thee,
  And twist round thy limbs like a vine.

What joy can be greater than this is?
  My life on thy lips shall be spent;
But the wretch that can number his kisses,
  With few will be ever content.

THE AUTHOR'S RECOMPENSE.

'TIS not the city only doth approve
My muse, or idle ears my verses love.
The rough centurion, where cold frosts o'erspread
The Scythian fields, in war my books doth read.

My lines are sung in Britain far remote;
But yet my empty purse perceives it not.
What deathless numbers from my pen would flow,
What wars would my Pierian trumpet blow,
If, as Augustus now again doth live,
So Rome to me would a Mæcenas give?

THE GIRL OF MY CHOICE.

YOU ask, were I to change my life,
What kind of girl I'd take to wife?
Not one who coy or easy seems,
I hate alike the two extremes;
She satiates who at first complies,
She starves my love who long denies.
The maid must not, I'd call my own,
Say "No" too oft, or "Yes" too soon.

PLINY THE YOUNGER.

PLINY the Younger was, in his writings, an imitator of Cicero, and resembled that illustrious Roman in his virtues as well as his weaknesses. Like Cicero, he was conceited and vain-glorious. As to intellectual capacity, he stood below either Cicero or his own friend Tacitus, and he knew it; but he was a clever, cultivated man of wide sympathies, who took an active part in public life, and was well acquainted with many phases of society. A rather severe recent critic has pronounced him a prig.

Caius Plinius Cæcilius Secundus was born at Comum in 61 A.D. His father, C. Cæcilius, having died, he was adopted by his uncle, Pliny the Elder, who consulted the best interests of his charge. The young man began public life as an advocate in his nineteenth year. He held in succession some of the highest offices in the state, was a favorite with the emperor Trajan, and an intimate friend of Tacitus. Though not so indefatigably industrious as his uncle, the younger Pliny was always desirous to learn, and was never happier than when surrounded by his books and papers in his country retreat. Under Nerva he began to collect and publish his speeches, none of which have been preserved, with the exception of his panegyric on the Emperor Trajan for his own elevation to the consulate. The only works of Pliny which have reached us are his "Letters," which occupy nine books. They treat agreeably of art, literature, politics, town and country life, with here and there an anecdote of some distinguished man or woman of the time. They were written with a view to publication, and therefore have not the freshness of unpremeditated correspondence; yet a kind of modern element, both in thought and expression, makes Pliny more congenial than many earlier writers.

PLINY'S LETTER CONCERNING THE CHRISTIANS.

PLINY, while governor of Bithynia, wrote the following letter to the Emperor Trajan in 103 A.D.

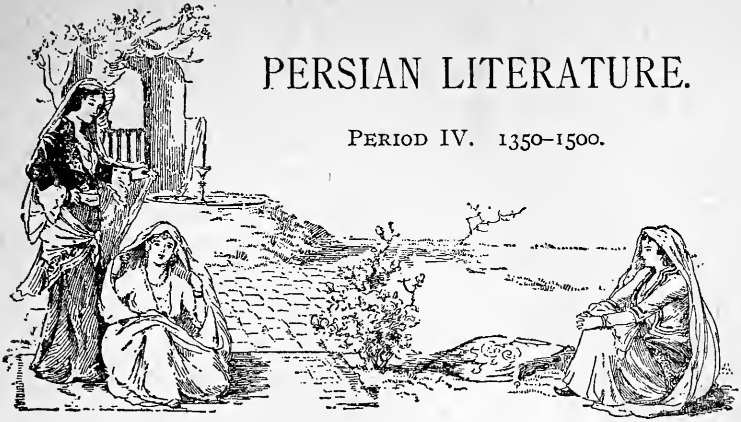
It is a rule, sir, which I inviolably observe, to refer myself to you in all my doubts; for who is more capable of removing my scruples, or informing my ignorance? Having never been present at any trials concerning those persons who are Christians, I am unacquainted, not only with the nature of their crimes or the measure of their punishment, but how far it is proper to enter into an examination concerning them. Whether, therefore, any difference is usually made with respect to the ages of the guilty, or no distinction is to be observed between the young and the adult; whether repentance entitles them to a pardon; or, if a man has been once a Christian, it avails nothing to desist from his error; whether the very profession of Christianity, unattended with any criminal act, or only the crimes themselves inherent in the profession, are punishable: in all these points I am greatly doubtful. In the meanwhile, the method I have observed towards those who have been brought before me as Christians, is this: I interrogated them whether they were Christians; if they confessed, I repeated the question twice, adding threats at the same time; and if they still persisted, I ordered them to be immediately punished. For I was persuaded, whatever the nature of their opinions might be, a contumacious and inflexible obstinacy certainly deserved correction. There were others also brought before me possessed with the same infatuation; but being citizens of Rome, I directed that they should be conveyed thither. But this crime spreading (as is usually the case) while it was actually under prosecution, several instances of the same nature occurred. An information was presented to me without any name subscribed, containing a charge against several persons: these, upon examination, denied they were, or ever had been, Christians. They repeated after me an invocation to the gods, and offered religious rites with wine and frankincense before your statue (which for that purpose I had ordered to be brought, together with those of the gods), and even reviled the name of Christ; whereas it is impossible, it is said, to force those who are really Christians into any of these compliances. I thought it proper, therefore, to discharge them. Some among those who were accused by a witness in person, at first confessed themselves Christians, but immediately after denied it; the rest owned, indeed, they had been of that number formerly, but had now (some above three years ago, others more, and a few above twenty) renounced that error. They all worshiped your statue, and the images of the gods, uttering imprecations at the same time against the name of Christ. They affirmed the whole of their guilt, or their error, was, that they met on a certain stated day before it was light, and addressed themselves in a form of prayer to Christ, as to some god, binding themselves by a solemn oath, not for the purposes of any wicked design, but never to commit any fraud, theft, or adultery; never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up; after which, it was their custom to separate, and then reassemble, to eat in common a harmless meal. From this custom, however, they desisted after the publication of my edict, by which, according to your commands, I forbade the meeting of any assemblies. In consequence of this their declaration, I judged it the more necessary to endeavor to extort the real truth, by putting two female slaves to the torture, who were said to officiate in their religious functions; but all I could discover was, that these people were actuated by an absurd and excessive superstition. I deemed it expedient, therefore, to adjourn all farther proceedings, in order to con sult you. For, it appears to be a matter highly deserving your consideration; more especially as great numbers must be involved in the danger of these prosecutions, which have already extended, and are still likely to extend, to persons of all ranks and ages, and even of both sexes. In fact, this contagious superstition is not confined to the cities only, but has spread its infection among the neighboring villages and country. Nevertheless, it still seems possible to restrain its progress. The temples, at least, which were once almost deserted, begin now to be frequented; and the sacred solemnities, after a long intermission, are revived; to which I must add, there is again also a general demand for the victims, which for some time past had met with but few purchasers. From the circumstances I have mentioned, it is easy to conjecture what numbers might be reclaimed, if a general pardon were granted to those who shall repent of their error.

TRAJAN'S REPLY TO PLINY'S LETTER.

THE method you have pursued, my dear Pliny, in the proceedings against those Christians who were brought before you, is extremely proper; as it is not possible to lay down any fixed rule by which to act in all cases of this nature. But I would not have you officiously enter into any inquiries concerning them. If indeed they should be brought before you, and the crime should be proved, they must be punished; with this restriction, however, that where the party denies he is a Christian, and shall make it evident that he is not, by invoking our gods; let him (notwithstanding any former suspicion) be pardoned upon his repentance. Informations without the accuser's name subscribed ought not to be received in prosecutions of any sort; as it is introducing a very dangerous precedent, and by no means agreeable to the equity of my government.

PERSIAN LITERATURE.

PERIOD IV. 1350–1500.



DURING the last half of the fourteenth century a sultan named Ilkhani reigned, with great splendor, over Persia and parts of Asia Minor. He was a poet, artist, illuminator, and musical composer. But his cruelty was remorseless, and his morals were detestable. The enmity of the influential families of Bagdad being thus excited, they wrote to the Tartar chief Timur (or Tamerlane), inviting him to take their land, and promising him their assistance. The country had hardly recovered from the ravages of Genghis Khan when Timur conquered the whole of ancient Persia, rushed on to India, and sacked Delhi. This monster waded through rivers of blood, and made pyramids of human heads in order to display his triumphs. Yet, when his power was assured, he was friendly to scholars, and not only history but poetry flourished under the rule of the Mongol conqueror.

Hafiz of Shiraz is the greatest lyric poet of Persia. He sang in praise of love and wine. When his native city was taken he was ordered into the presence of Timur, who sharply rebuked him for some wild exaggerations of his verse. Hafiz made a witty reply, and was instantly received into royal favor, and was showered with magnificent gifts. In his old age the poet became attached to the Sufis—a sect whose members prefer the meditations of mysticism to the pleasures of the world.

The sons and grandsons of Timur vied with each other in encouraging scholars; under them astronomy, history, and mathematics flourished. The most illustrious poet of this age was Jami. Instead of using his long and uneuphonious name in his writings he wisely preferred to call himself from his native town of Jam, near Herar. He studied the mysticism of the Sufis, and became master of the doctrine and head of the order. Kings and princes traveled far for his advice. He wrote ninety-nine books, and is considered the last great poet and mystic of Persia. With the death of Jami, the last of the Persian Pleiades, about the end of the fifteenth century, the era of poetry, which had been so rich and varied, practically ended. For a time the descendants of Timur reigned, both in India and Persia, under the title of the "Great Mogul." India had given to Persia Sufism and her fables; Persia gave to India her immortal verse.

Akbar, a Persian-Indian sovereign, appointed forty-four historians at his court. Ten of them were to be on duty at a time, and to write the doings of the day. He also planned a work to be called "The History of a Thousand Years." The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were periods of decay. All that can be said of them is, that a Persian dictionary was compiled, and letter-writing took the place of literature. At present Persia is given up to the worship of pure mysticism, as embodied in the doctrines of the Sufis. There are many reasons for this decadence—wars, famines, revolts; but perhaps the chief cause is the fanaticism and corruption of the Mohammedan priests who are the real power behind the throne. But a country that can point with pride to the world-wide fascination of such names as Firdausi, Sadi and Hafiz; to such poems as "Laili and Majnun;" to such romances as "Meher and Mushteri," need not fear for her intellectual future. There have been other decadences and other revivals, and all that Persia needs to enable her to rival her past, are freedom and opportunity.

HAFIZ.

HAFIZ is the assumed name of a poet of Shiraz, his real name being Shemsuddin Mohammed. When his native city was conquered by the Mongol Timur he was ordered into the presence of the tyrant who rebuked him for having falsely pretended to the possession of cities when he wrote the following line: "For the black mole on thy cheek I would give the cities of Samarcand and Bokhara."

The undaunted Hafiz calmly replied: "Yes, sire, and it is by such acts of generosity that I am reduced, as you see, to my present state of poverty." Timur smiled, and overwhelmed him with splendid gifts, and desired his presence at court. But the poet, preferring his independence and the society of his friends, quietly refused. He died in 1388. A curious anecdote is told in connection with the poet's death. His life had been such that the Mohammedan priests hesitated to bury him with the funeral rites appropriate to their faith, but at the request of his friends, they allowed the case to be decided by a peculiar lot. Selecting a number of couplets from his odes, they placed them in a bowl. A little child was then told to withdraw one, at random; and it was agreed that the body should be buried in accordance with the sense of the lines so selected. The child took out the following: "Withhold not your step from the bier of Hafiz; for, though sunk in sin, he goes to Paradise." Upon the strength of this evidence the priests gladly gave the body honorable burial.

Hafiz is the Anacreon of Persia. In his youth he sang of love and wine, being even more Anacreontic than the famous Greek poet. In his advanced years Hafiz is said by some commentators to have turned Sufi, and his poetry became so full of veiled allusions that his followers called it the "language of mystery." He combined the qualities of Pindar, Anacreon, Horace and Burns, with the insight of a mystic. To-day the muleteers and camel-drivers of the desert sing snatches of his songs to give expression to the pure joy of living, while cultivated Persians know his poems by heart.

His verses are full of roses and of musk, the song of nightingales, the light of the warm stars, the shade of cypress and of olives, and all the balmy odors of the mysterious East. Emerson says of him: "Hafiz praises wine, roses, maidens, boys, birds, mornings and, music to give vent to his immense hilarity and sympathy with every form of beauty and joy. But it is the play of wit and the joy of song that he loves; and if you mistake him for a low rioter he turns on you with verses which express the poverty of sensual joys, and an heroic sentiment and contempt for the world."

That a Moslem poet should write hundreds of poems in praise of wine, and even drunkenness, is a palpable anomaly. Hence around the lyrics of Hafiz a war of discussion is waging similar to that which is roused by "The Song of Solomon." Was Hafiz sensual, or under the guise of sensuality were his meanings mystical? The Persian critics, followed by some Europeans, give him a saving verdict, with recommendation to mercy. His early poems were distinctly sensual. After he became a Sufi his verses, whatever the subject, were full of hidden meanings.

CHARMS THAT CHARM NOT.

THIS poem illustrates the peculiar structure of the Persian ghazel. In the last stanza the poet's name is always inserted.

WITHOUT the loved one's cheek the rose
Can charm not.
The spring, unless the wine-cup flows,
Can charm not.
The greenwood's border and the orchard's air,
Unless some tulip cheek be there,
Can charm not.
The sugar-lipped, the fair of rosy frame,
Whom kisses nor embrace can claim,
Can charm not.
The dancing cypress, the enrapturing flower,
If no nightingale gladden the bower,
Can charm not.
The painter's picture, though with genius rife,
Without the picture that has life,
Can charm not.

Wine, flower, and bower abound in charm, yet they,
Lack we the friend who makes us gay,
Can charm not.
Thy soul, O Hafiz! is a coin that none prize;
And it, though poured forth largess-wise,
Can charm not.

THE FEAST OF SPRING.

MY breast is filled with roses,
My cup is crowned with wine,
And the veil her face discloses—
The maid I hail as mine.
The monarch, wheresoe'er he be,
Is but a slave compared to me.

Their glare no torches throwing,
Shall in our bower be found—
Her eyes, like moonbeams glowing,
Cast light enough around;
And other odors I can spare
Who scent the perfume of her hair.

The honey-dew thy charm might borrow,
Thy lip alone to me is sweet;
When thou art absent, faint with sorrow
I hide me in some lone retreat.
Why talk to me of power or fame?
What are those idle toys to me?
Why ask the praises of my name,
My joy, my triumph is in thee.

How blest am I! around me swelling
The notes of melody arise!
I hold the cup with wine excelling,
And gaze upon thy radiant eyes.

O Hafiz—never waste thy hours
Without the cup, the lute, and love,
For 'tis the sweetest time of flowers,
And none these moments shall reprove.
The nightingales around thee sing;
It is the joyous feast of spring.

THE DRUNKARD'S EXCUSE.

KNOW you the true reason and cause why it is that I drink?
From pride and from folly I strutted and swelled through the town:
And now those detestable vices, from which the saints shrink,
I will in the depths of the ocean of drunkenness drown.

MY BIRD.

MY soul is as a sacred bird, the highest heaven its nest,
Fretting within its body-bars, it finds on earth its nest;
When rising from its dusty heap this bird of mine shall soar
'Twill find upon the lofty gate the nest it had before.
The Sidrah shall receive my bird, when it has winged its way,
And on the Empyrean's top, my falcon's foot shall stay.
Over the ample field of earth is fortune's shadow cast,
Where upon wings and pennons borne this bird of mine has passed.
No spot in the two worlds it owns, above the sphere its goal,
Its body from the quarry is, from "No Place" is its soul.
'Tis only in the glorious world my bird its splendor shows,
The rosy bowers of Paradise its daily food bestows.

THE LUTE AND BEAKER.

THE first couplet rhymes; then the second line of each succeedin couplet uses the same rhyme.

This lute to many a feast has added zest,
This goblet waited on full many a guest.
Believer, come! the wine-house lures; come, hark,
And drink; with cup and lute be wholly blest.
Their wine and music put to shame the lore
Of Koran, Puran, Ved and Zendavest.
Believer, come! feel inspiration's breath
Exhaling through your soul, and through your breast.
And if the world would catch you in her snares,
Reject her with the might of one protest.
Unnumbered sages have rejoiced when soft
This lute's sweet solace has their hearts caressed.

Unnumbered kings have smiled to quaff this cup,
When anxious thought and woe their souls oppressed.
Through these two charmers dear, unnumbered bards
Have drowned their pain when grief their lives possessed.
This lute and cup have much life-wisdom won,
Experience of the East and of the West.
They know the ancient secrets to relate
Of Solomon's, of Jemshid's harem-nest.
They know of celebrated haughty thrones,
Of many a shattered crown and tattered vest.
They know the magic fruit of Paradise,
Which ripens not on this world's boughs at rest.
All this in their dear circles they impart,
At feasts, to the clear spirits of the blest.
They have against the idle host of cares
Declared a war by open manifest.
For age's frost they give a robe of flame,
For sorrow's fire a raiment of asbest.
He in whose mind this witch-lute's music melts
The core from every mystery shall wrest.
He through whose veins this god-cup's nectar pours
Shall riddles read no other man hath guessed.
Who drains the wealth of both shall see at once
Dark Ahriman a solved and faded jest.
These lute-cup strains and streams of tone and taste
Make of the poorest inn a heaven confessed.
The pious saint who drinks their breath and blood
Shall sit, bliss-drunk, upon creation's crest.
He shall through dazzling skies of pleasure soar,
With godhead filled, and in delirium dressed.
He shall through reeling seas of wonder sink,
Still grasping fast the aim of every quest.
In joyous peace content, with safety crowned,
He shall despise each threat, each poisonous pest.
And when life ends, to heaven he shall spring,
And prove his bliss by death's supremest test.
The lute, then, twang! the goblet clink and kiss!--
'Tis dying, drunken Hafiz' farewell hest.

JAMI.

JAMI is the poetic name of Nuruddin Abdurrahman, the last great poet of Persia. He was born at Jam, in Khorasan, in 1414 A.D. He studied at Herat and Samarcand, and became noted for learning and sanctity so that he was called Maulana, Our Master. The Sultan Abu Said invited him to his court at Herat, where he enjoyed the company of the most learned and talented men of the time. Jami's whole life was devoted to study and literary work, the result of which appeared in fifty volumes of poetry, grammar and theology, still read and admired in Persia. He died in 1492.

His best work is the "Yusuf and Zulaikha," a poem of eight thousand lines, founded on the Biblical story of Joseph, as re-cast in the Koran and the Moslem commentaries. It has been translated by R. T. H. Griffith. Joseph is still the Persian ideal of manly beauty and more than manly virtue. Zuleika is the wife of Potiphar, but her love for the young Hebrew is regarded not as a fault or sin, but as a divinely-inspired passion, which is rewarded after Potiphar's death by their predestined union. Religious teachers find in this story an allegory of the human soul's love of the highest beauty and goodness. Jami composed altogether seven mystical poems, which are clustered under the title of the "Seven Thrones." The last of these was "Salaman and Absal," which has been translated by Edward Fitzgerald.

BEAUTY AND LOVE.

BEFORE eternity to time had shrunken,
The Friend [God] deep in his glorious self was sunken.
Around his charms a firm-bound girdle hovered:
No one the lonely path to him discovered.
A mirror held he to each wondrous feature,
But shared the vision's bliss with not a creature.
In cradling Naught's abyss alone he rocked him,
No playmate's face or gambols sportive mocked him.
Then rose He up—swift vanished all resistance—
And gave the boundless universe existence.

Now Beauty, sun-clear, from his right side beameth;
Love, moon-like, quickly from his left side gleameth.
When Beauty's flame lights up the cheek's red roses,
Love fans a fire from which no heart reposes.
Between them glows a league which forms no cinder,
But from all Beauty's food creates Love's tinder.
When Beauty 'midst her snaring ringlets lieth,
Then Love the heart within those fair locks tieth.
A nest is Beauty, Love the brooding linnet:
A mine is Beauty, Love the diamond in it.
From God's two sides they came, twin emanation,
To chase and woo each other through creation.
But in each atom's point, both, clasping, enter,
And constitute all being's blissful centre.

ZULAIKHA.

THERE was a king in the West. His name,
Taimus, was spread wide by the drum of fame.
Of royal power and wealth possessed,
No wish unanswered remained in his breast.
His brow gave lustre to glory's crown,
And his foot gave the thrones of the mighty renown.
With Orion from heaven his host to aid,
Conquest was his when he bared his blade.
His child Zulaikha was passing fair,
None in his heart might with her compare;
Of his royal house the most brilliant star,
A gem from the chest where the treasures are.
Praise cannot equal her beauty, no;
But its faint, faint shadow my pen may show.
Like her own bright hair falling loosely down,
I will touch each charm to her feet from her crown.
May the soft reflection of that bright cheek,
Lend light to my spirit and bid me speak,
And that flashing ruby, her mouth, bestow
The power to tell of the things I know.
  Her stature was like to a palm-tree grown
In the garden of grace where no sin is known.
Bedewed by the love of her father the king,
She mocked the cypress that rose by the spring.
Sweet with the odor of musk, a snare

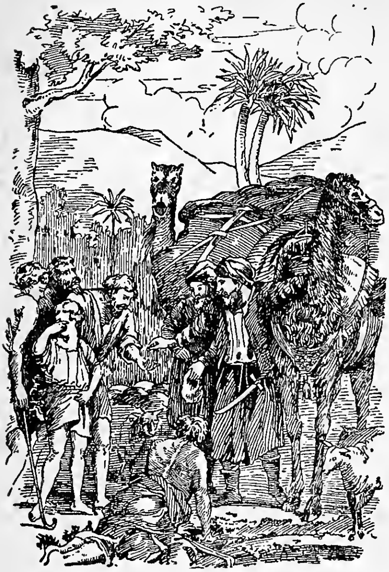
For the heart of the wise was the maiden's hair.
Tangled at night, in the morning through
Her long thick tresses a comb she drew,
And cleft the heart of the musk-deer in twain
As for that rare odor he sighed in vain.
A dark shade fell from her loose hair sweet
As jasmine over the rose of her feet.
A broad silver tablet her forehead displayed
For the heaven-set lessons of beauty made.
Her face was the garden of Iram, where
Roses of every hue are fair.
The dusky moles that enhanced the red
Were like Moorish boys playing in each rose-bed.
Of silver that paid no tithe, her chin
Had a well with the Water of Life therein.
If a sage in his thirst came near to drink,
He would feel the spray ere he reached the brink,
But lost were his soul if he nearer drew,
For it was a well and a whirlpool too.
Her neck was of ivory. Thither drawn,
Came with her tribute to beauty the fawn;
And the rose hung her head at the gleam of the skin
Of shoulders fairer than jessamine.
Her breasts were orbs of a light more pure,
Twin bubbles new risen from fount Kafur:
Two young pomegranates grown on one spray,
Where bold hope never a finger might lay.
The touchstone itself was proved false when it tried
Her arms' fine silver thrice purified;
But the pearl-pure amulets fastened there
Were the hearts of the holy absorbed in prayer.
The loveliest gave her their souls for rue,
And round the charm their own heartstrings drew.
Her arms filled her sleeves with silver from them
Whose brows are bound with the diadem.
To labor and care her soft hand lent aid,
And to wounded hearts healing unction laid.
Like reeds were those taper fingers of hers,
To write on each heart love's characters.
Each nail on those fingers so long and slim
Showed a new moon laid on a full moon's brim,
And her small closed hand made the moon confess

That she never might rival its loveliness.
Two columns fashioned of silver upheld
That beauty which never was paralleled,
And to make the tale of her charms complete,
They were matched by the shape of her exquisite feet.
Feet so light and elastic no maid might show,
So perfectly fashioned from heel to toe.
The hem of her mantle alone might gain
A kiss of that foot while kings sought it in vain;
And no hand but the fold of her robe embraced
The delicate stem of her dainty waist.
  Maidens like cypresses straight and tall,
With Peri faces, obeyed her call;
And by day and by night in her service stood
The Houris' loveliest sisterhood.
No burden as yet had her sweet soul borne;
Never her foot had been pierced by a thorn.
No breath of passion her heart might stir,
And to love and be loved was unknown to her.
Like the languid Narcissus she slept at night,
And hailed like an opening bud the light.

YUSUF SOLD BY HIS BRETHREN.

THE brothers had lingered not far from the well,
And they burned in their hearts to know what befell;
They saw the merchants arrive, and stood
Waiting for news in the neighborhood.
To Yusuf they called with a secret cry,
But a hollow echo came back in reply.
To the caravan with quick steps, intent
On claiming the boy as their slave, they went,
And with toil and labor they made their way
Within the ring where the merchants lay.
"This is our slave," as they touched him, they cried;
"The collar of service his hand has untied.
The bonds of his duty were loosened, and he
From the yoke of his masters had dared to flee.
Though born in our house we will gladly sell
The idle boy who will never do well.
When a slave is negligent, idle, perverse,
Ever growing from bad to worse,

'Tis better to sell him, though small the price,
Than suffer still from his rooted vice.
We will labor no more to improve the wretch,
But sell him at once for the price he may fetch."



He was sold for a trifle to him whose cord
Had brought him up to the light restored.
Malik—so named was the merchant—gave
A few pieces for Yusuf as household slave.
Then the traders arising their march renewed,
And onward to Egypt their way pursued.
Woe unto those who that treasure sold,
And bartered their souls for some paltry gold!
No life, nor the treasures of Egypt, could buy
One word from his lip or one glance from his eye.
Only Jacob his sire and Zulaikha, the true,
The priceless worth of that treasure knew.
But his worth was unknown to those blinded eyes,
And they took a few pence for the blessed prize.

YUSUF'S FLIGHT.

ZULAIKHA had seen Yusuf in a vision and had fallen in love with him. After refusing many princely suitors, she was married to the Grand Vizier of Egypt. Later she purchased in the slave market the beloved youth of her dreams and brought him to her palace. Finally she declared her love.

SHE told her love, and her sorrow woke
With a pang renewed at each word she spoke.
But Yusuf looked not upon her: in dread
He lowered his eyes and he bent his head.
As he looked on the ground in a whirl of thought
He saw his own form on the carpet wrought,

Where a bed was figured of silk and brocade,
And himself by the side of Zulaikha laid.
From the pictured carpet he looked in quest
Of a spot where his eye might, untroubled, rest.
He looked on the wall, on the door; the pair
Of rose-lipped lovers was painted there.
He lifted his glance to the Lord of the skies:
That pair from the ceiling still met his eyes.
Then the heart of Yusuf would fain relent,
And a tender look on Zulaikha he bent,
While a thrill of hope through her bosom passed
That the blessed sun would shine forth at last.
The hot tears welled from her heart to her eyes,
And she poured out her voice in a storm of sighs. . . .
"Fair daughter," said he, "of the Peri race—
But no Peri can match thee in form or face—
Tempt me no more to a deed of shame,
Nor break the fair glass of a stainless name.
Drag not my skirt through the dust and mire,
Nor fill my veins with unholy fire.
By the Living God, the great soul of all,
Inner and outward and great and small,
From whose ocean this world like a bubble rose,
And the sun by the flash of His splendor glows;
By the holy line of my fathers, whence
I have learned the fair beauty of innocence;
From whom I inherit my spirit's light,
And through them is the star of my fortune bright;
If thou wilt but leave me this day in peace,
And my troubled soul from this snare release,
Thou shalt see thy servant each wish obey,
And with faith unshaken thy grace repay.
The lips of thy darling to thine shall be pressed,
And the arms that thou lovest shall lull thee to rest.
Haste not too fast to the goal: delay
Is often more blessed than speed on the way,
And the first paltry capture is ever surpassed
By the nobler game that is netted at last."
Zulaikha answered: "Ah, never think
That the thirsty will wait for the morrow to drink.
My spirit has rushed to my lips, and how
Can I wait for the joy that I long for now?

My heart has no power to watch and wait
For the tender bliss that will come so late.
Thy pleading is weak, and no cause I see
Why thou shouldst not this moment be happy with me."
  Then Yusuf answered: "Two things I fear—
The judgment of God, and the Grand Vizier.
If the master knew of the shameful deed,
With a hundred sorrows my heart would bleed.
Full well thou knowest my furious lord
Would strike me dead with his lifted sword.
And think of the shame that the sin would lay
On my guilty soul at the Judgment day,
When the awful book is unclosed wherein
Recording angels have scored my sin." . . .
  One nook of the chamber was dark with the shade
Of a curtain that glittered with gold brocade.
And Yusuf questioned her: "What or who
Is behind the curtain concealed from view?"
"It is he," she answered, "to whom, while I live,
My faithful service I still must give:
A golden idol with jeweled eyes—
A salver of musk in his bosom lies.
I bend before him each hour of the day,
And my head at his feet in due worship lay.
Before his presence this screen I drew
To be out of the reach of his darkened view.
If I swerve from religion I would not be
Where the angry eyes of my god may see."
And Yusuf cried with a bitter cry:
"Not a mite of the gold of thy faith have I.
Thine eye is abashed before those that are dead,
And shrinks from the sight of the lifeless in dread.
And God Almighty shall I not fear,
Who liveth and seeth and ever is near?"
  He ceased: from the fond dream of rapture he woke;
From the arms of Zulaikha he struggled and broke.
With hasty feet from her side he sped,
And burst open each door on his way as he fled.
Bolt and bar from the stanchions he drew—
All opened before him as onward he flew.
Of his lifted finger a key was made,
Which every lock at a sign obeyed.

But Zulaikha caught him, with steps more fast,
Or ever the farthest chamber he passed.
She clutched his skirt as he fled amain,
And the coat from his shoulder was rent in twain.
Reft of his garment, he slipped from her hand
Like a bud from its sheath when the leaves expand.
She rent her robe in her anguish; low
On the earth, like a shadow, she lay in her woe.

The Widow's Lament.

A HAPLESS bird was Zulaikha. She pined
In the narrow cage of the world confined.
Befriended by fortune, in pride and power,
When a rose-bed bloomed in her secret bower;
With her lord beside her to shade and screen
The tender plant when her bud was green—
With all dainty things, if she cared but to speak;
When no lamp was so bright as her youthful cheek:
Yusuf e'en then her whole heart possessed—
The sweet name on her lips, the dear hope in her breast.
Now, when from her side her protector was reft,
When nought of her rank and her treasures was left,
The sole friend of her heart, who ne'er changed his place,
Was the sweet remembrance of Yusuf's face.
She thought of him ever; her sad house seemed
Her dear fatherland when of him she dreamed.
No food could she eat, and she closed not her eyes;
She wept tears of blood and she said with sighs:—
"Beloved Yusuf, where, where art thou?
Why false and faithless to pledge and vow?
Oh, that again those sweet hours I might see,
When one happy home held my love and me!
When no fear of parting could mar delight,
And I gazed on his beauty from morn till night.
When stern fate robbed me of this sweet joy,
I sent to the prison that innocent boy.
Unseen by night to his presence I stole,
And the sight of his cheek was as balm to my soul;
And a glance at the walls where my darling lay
Rubbed the rust of grief from my heart by day.

No joy is now left me, no solace like these;
My heart and frame perish of pain and disease.
All I have left is the image which still,
Where'er I may be, this sad bosom must fill.
The soul of this frame is that image, and I
Bereft of its presence, should languish and die."
Then her breast and her heart she would fiercely tear,
And engrave the form of her darling there.
She would strike her soft knee with her hand till the blue
Of the lotus supplanted the jasmine's hue.
"I am worthy the love of my love," she would cry,
"For my love is the sun and the lotus am I.
As my love is the lord of the east and the west,
The place of the lotus for me is the best."

PERSIAN STORIES.

STORY-TELLING began in Persia, and even the stories of the "Arabian Nights" came from the entertainment of a Persian king. The gift of imaginative and descriptive eloquence was considered by the Persians the most precious that could belong to man or woman. Those who had it cultivated it in order to find favor among the great. A reciter or declaimer, as he was called, often elevated his whole family or tribe by his fascinating powers. Sometimes a criminal would postpone or avoid death by a craftily devised tale with endless episodes. There were professional story-tellers who could relieve pain or lull the restless to sleep with their low croonings of romance. And many a harem's queen owed her high position to the gentle art with which she wove her tales of adventure and of love. Among the endless romances of Persian life sung or recited in palace, market-place, camp or hut, the loved, the undying one, is the story of two foster brothers, Meher and Mushteri. The author of this is Assar, of whom practically nothing else seems to be known. The tale is one of affection, treachery, fidelity, suffering, consolation, and a magnanimity of forgiveness which we have been accustomed to associate with an unaffected submission to the teachings of Christ.

MEHER AND MUSHTERI.

IN ancient times, in the city of Persepolis, there lived a rich and magnificent king, whose name was Shapur. He was blessed with a grand vizier, loyal, devoted and just. The king had a son Meher; his vizier had a son Mushteri. So intimate were the relations between the monarch and his principal officer that the beautiful boys were educated together, having the same masters, the same studies, the same sports. Hand in hand, they grew up nearly to manhood united by a bond as strong as that of fraternal love.

In the king's household there was another official who also had a son, Behram. He foresaw that when Meher should reign Mushteri would be grand vizier, and he wanted that position for his own son. The royal tutor was a good man, but old and easily influenced. He was made to believe that Mushteri was no fit companion for the prince, and that Behram was. When he told these matters to the king, the latter, in a fury, caused the two boys to be separated; and when they communicated by letter, he ordered both from his presence to instant execution. The whole court looked on in horror, and a nephew of the king's, at the risk of his own life, fell upon his knees and begged for mercy for the innocent and unfortunate pair. For a time it looked as if he too would be sacrificed to the royal rage; but the sentence was finally changed to this: The prince must go into strict imprisonment; Mushteri and the lad who carried the letters to and fro must leave the kingdom forever.

The grand vizier died of grief; and after a while the prince was released and sought his mother. The dark-eyed queen sat alone in her splendid apartments. They were draped with rich portières, and the pure white centres were surrounded with heavy borders. Behind those Persian hangings were vases of silver and gold, in which burned the costly gums from Tibet, filling the air with the fragrance of incense. The windows opened into gardens where the citron and rose-apple kept their bright blossoms and gleaming fruits, and the broad-leaved bananas waved their silken flags in the sunlight. There were fountains where jets of water, smooth and unbroken, gleamed like silver in the sunshine; and in the marble basins below them the birds dipped their wings in the cooling wave, and the bulbul sang of mornings without clouds. The queen sat in splendid isolation, pale and broken-hearted, not knowing that her son was released, and was now at hand. He knocked, he entered, and the two sad hearts were happy again. After a long conversation the mother put into Meher's hands a bag of precious stones—for she had no money—and bade him fly. The two were loath to part, but tarrying meant unknown dangers, for the boy was afraid of his father, and they separated, cheering each other with hopes of better days. That night, with some chosen companions, Meher fled to the coast, and, selling their Arab steeds, the three set sail for a distant land.

When the king heard this he first raged with anger, then fainted with grief; and, on recovering, asked to be carried to the apartments of the queen, who cared for him with the tenderness of pity until he had regained his equanimity.

The next day the treacherous Behram entered his master's presence, and asked for money, jewels, and a caravan, that he might seek the young heir and restore him to his father's arms. This request was joyfully granted, and in a few days he passed through the gates of Persepolis with a long line of camels, laden with rich merchandise, and twenty slaves to do his bidding. If he found the prince, well; if not, he had had wealth enough given him to dwell in affluence in other lands.

In the meantime Mushteri and his companion, the faithful lad, Bader, had gone but a short distance on foot when they were stripped of all they had by robbers, and left to perish in the desert. Nearly dead from heat and thirst, they were rescued by a passing caravan. But being still in Persian dominions, and knowing that if taken they would be executed, they desired to push on. Their kind host provided them with a small sum of money, and they took passage on one of the vessels sailing on the Caspian Sea. The vessel was wrecked in a terrific storm, and Mushteri and Bader, while clinging together and tossed about on the waves, were discovered by the king of the country whose coast they were near, and rescued at his command.

After being rested and fed and refreshed, they were carried to the palace. Within the royal courts there was a maze of light and loveliness; music from pipe and lute was borne through the cool casement, and beautiful dancing girls glided through the soft measures. In the whirl of these graceful motions could be seen rings, and pearls, and emeralds shining everywhere; while round the white necks of the dancers hung necklaces of diamonds that glowed like fire in the light of many lamps. The king was delighted with his guests, and, furnishing them with every luxury, bade them stay. But Mushteri pined for his beloved companion, and, when some Persian traders brought the news of Meher's flight, his friend determined to find him or die in the attempt. Nothing that the kindly king could offer was any inducement to him to remain in rest and luxury while his heart's brother was missing from his side; and once more he and his faithful Bader ventured forth into a cruel world, and fell almost instantly into the hands of the malicious Behram.

Meanwhile Meher, after many adventures, found himself the guest of the owner of a caravan bound for Kharizm, the capital of the domains of the great King Keiwan. The latter, hearing of the traveler, was desirous to learn his story. Meher stepped into the royal presence with easy grace, and presented him with a ruby more valuable than any in his own collection. The king, after a long interview, was unable to determine whether the beautiful youth was a prince in disguise or a robber. He put him through several tests which displayed his knowledge of horsemanship, of the arts of war; and above everything else, of a polite scholarship impossible to any one not of high rank. And when, in a game of chess, the king saw Meher checkmate his veteran player in six moves his admiration knew no bounds. Many of these tests, the feats of horsemanship for instance, the Princess Nahid had witnessed from behind a screen, and she fell in love with the gallant youth. This she confessed to her nurse, and the nurse told it to the queen, and the queen to the king: and that Nahid had said she would wed the stranger, and no other.

Then King Kara Khan, of Samarcand, sent word that he wished to marry the girl, and was refused. And, in revenge, he fell upon the city, with his hordes of mountaineers, but was captured by the stripling Meher; upon which his troops fled. Kara Khan's life was spared at the intercession of the stranger; and after this Meher was treated with honors only second to those given to royalty. But now a terrible thing happens. Nahid was wandering with her attendants one day in a distant part of the palace grounds when she saw Meher asleep on a grassy bank; and he was dreaming of her. For although the prince had never seen the princess he had heard much of her beauty, and he felt that he loved her to distraction. In spite of the warnings of her companion, who pointed out to her the scandalous impropriety of being in the presence of a man with her face unveiled—spite of this, Nahid kneeled and gazed with tenderness upon the beautiful youth. At that moment he awakened, and, recognizing the lady of his dreams—for he was sure it was she—and, seeing the sweet face so near, he kissed her lips. That token meant instant death if it were discovered; and the lovers tremblingly separated.

Meher determined to escape and continue the search for his beloved friend, whom he felt he had too long neglected and forgotten. But at that moment he received a summons from the king. He entered the royal presence expecting a sentence of death, but was invited instead to marry Nahid. Falling upon his knees, the prince confessed everything—his birth, his heirship to the throne of Persia, the story of Mushteri, his imprisonment, his flight, his anxiety and affection for his foster brother, his love for Nahid—and the impulsive kiss. King Keiwan listened and frowned, and forgave. But when Meher said that before everything else his duty must be to search for his friend, the king listened and frowned, and did not forgive; and the prince left the palace in disgrace.

In the meanwhile a Persian caravan was rapidly approaching the city of Kharizm. It was Behram's, and with it were the two captives, Mushteri and Bader. Meher heard of this caravan and of the prisoners, and recognized Behram without being himself seen; and he began to hope that he had at last found his friend and the faithful boy-attendant. He wrote to the king asking that the owner of the caravan should be arrested, as he knew him to be a bad and cruel man. Keiwan at first angrily refused, but on being pressed again and again, finally consented. Behram was brought before him. Meher was behind a screen. On being questioned, the treacherous Persian replied that his captives were two servants who had robbed him and were only getting their just deserts. The prisoners were brought in to testify on their own behalf, but Mushteri had been so beaten and starved, and even painted, that his own mother would not have known him. Meher looked at him in an agony of disappointment until he began to speak. The voice was the voice of his friend; and, rushing from his place of concealment, the prince clasped his long-lost playmate in his arms. The poor captive fainted with weakness and with joy, but was carried to Meher's splendid apartments and carefully tended until he was well again.

Behram, after a short imprisonment in a dark cell, was led forth to execution. Meher looked at him, and remembered the treachery of the man, and his cruelty, and all the ruin he had wrought; and then he thought of his own happiness and the misery of the wretch before him, and, overwhelmed with pity, he knelt at the feet of the king and begged for the life of his foe. Long did he plead, was long denied, and finally was told to do with Behram what he would.

The prince unlocked his chains, returned him his camels, and stores, and merchandise; and, in kindly tones, bade him to go in peace to his land, and to the aged father who wept for him. Behram went from his presence alone into the desert, and, overwhelmed with shame and mortification, he died there by his own hand.

The rest of this pure, beautiful, magnanimous, and interminable tale is taken up with the splendor of the nuptials of Nahid and Meher. The heir returns to Persia with his bride. Father, mother, court and nation went wild with gladness when the prince came to his own again, with the peerless Nahid by his side. The king, aged and weary, soon abdicated in his son's favor; and when Meher ascended the throne his grand vizier was, of course, the faithful Mushteri.

ITALIAN LITERATURE.

PERIOD III. 1500–1600.

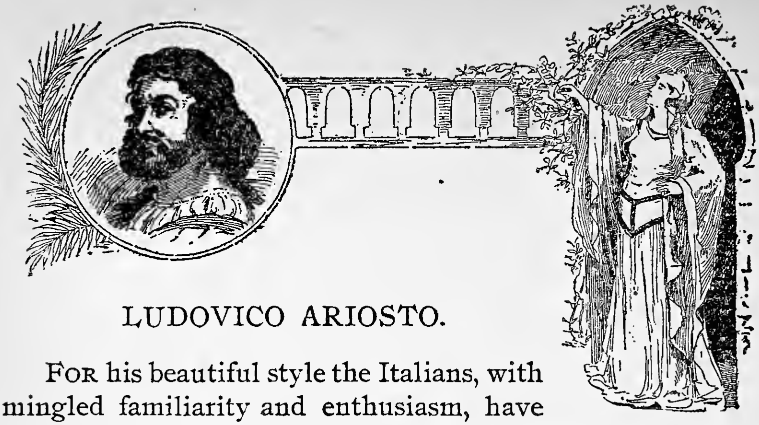
EPIC poetry enjoyed a singular revival in Italy in the fifteenth century and reached its zenith in the sixteenth. It began with the light uplifting of the romances of Charlemagne by the genial Luigi Pulci from the mire into which they had sunk. The same themes were treated more seriously by his contemporary, Count Boiardo. Similar legends invited other poets. Luigi Alamanni (1495–1556) wrote an Arthurian epic, "Avarchide," on the siege of Bourges; Gian Giorgio Trissino (1478–1550) treated in blank verse "L'Italia Liberata," the theme being the expedition of Belisarius against the Goths; Bernardo Tasso, father of the greater poet, composed a hundred cantos on the Amadis of Gaul; the unfortunate Berni (*d.* 1536) made a recast of Boiardo's "Orlando Innamorato." But this attractive subject still waited for the genius of the divine Ariosto to make it the standard of the romantic epic. His fertile imagination enriched the old legends with a profusion of episodes and poetic charms, as the vine twining over the elm decks it with abundance of new leaves and rich clusters. Though the basis of his epic belongs to the Christian period, the poem is half pagan in treatment, as was characteristic of the Italian Renaissance, and sports with its heroes sometimes in an entertaining way, but again in a provoking manner.

The richly gifted, yet too sensitive, genius of Tasso coming later into the field, resolved to construct a truly Christian epic on a theme which should stir the emotions of Christian hearts.

The First Crusade, by its momentous contest between the piously enthusiastic yet comparatively barbarous Christians of the West, and the noble and brilliant Saracens, was worthy of the noblest efforts of his lofty imagination and prolific fancy. The scene was laid in the East, in a land which had been the theatre of most brilliant actions, and was consecrated by the associations of piety. The Saracens considered themselves called to subjugate the world to the faith of the Prophet Mohammed; the Christians to recover the sepulchre of their Divine Redeemer. The religious spirit of that age was wholly warlike, and it had a remarkable echo in the age of Tasso, when the Turks were threatening the conquest of Europe. Tasso's epic is confined to the campaign of 1099, in which Jerusalem was delivered from the rule of the Saracens. In it a nobler part is assigned to the passion of love than has been given in any other epic. With the heroes of the ancient classics love is a weakness, but with the Christian knights a devotion. In this respect Tasso's poem was undoubtedly a reflex of his own character, full of romance and tender sentiments.

Tasso also imitated Æschylus in his tragedy "Torrismondo" on the subject of the Goths, and invented the pastoral drama in "Aminta." Sannazaro had already revived the pastoral in his "Arcadia," but the pastoral play was a novelty. Tasso's shepherds live in the Golden Age, and while not of courtly fashion, neither are they of modern rusticity. The love-sick swain and scornful shepherdess are introduced, but they were not entirely unknown in the earlier Provençal lays.

During this century the flood of novels in imitation of Boccaccio's "Decameron" still continued. Sabadino Degli Arienti, Agnolo Firenzuola, Giraldi Cinthio, Francesco Grazzini, Straparola, Matteo Bandello and many others wrote tales of similar tenor, the plots of which have often been adopted by writers of other nationalities. Bandello is esteemed the next in rank to Boccaccio.



LUDOVICO ARIOSTO.

For his beautiful style the Italians, with mingled familiarity and enthusiasm, have called Ariosto "Ludovico the Divine." He was born in 1474 and died in 1533, being the greatest Italian poet between Petrarch and Tasso. His romantic epic, "Orlando Furioso," fills a curious niche in the Temple of Fame between Dante's "Commedia" and Tasso's "Gerusalemme Liberata" (Jerusalem Delivered). Both of these masterpieces were inspired by a truly religious spirit. Dante's poem was half pagan, half mediæval; Tasso's was half mediæval, half modern. In Ariosto, however, we behold the reflex of the skepticism of his age, that turned from the legends of the Church to the Carlovingian romances. In order to appreciate exactly the impulse, nature and success of Ariosto's poem it is necessary to recall the rise of this romantic cycle and its antecedent treatment at the hands of Luigi Pulci (1431–1484), and Count Matteo Boiardo (1434–1494), without the last of whom, indeed, it may be truthfully said Ariosto's work would have been impossible. It must be observed that "Charlemagne became to Christendom what Æneas was to Rome, and his historical character was entirely superseded and overlaid by his mythical and acquired personality. The chief repository of the legends concerning him is the Latin chronicle of Saint Jago, attributed by its author to Archbishop Turpin, the Emperor's spiritual peer, and the Northern French *chansons de geste*, which were very popular in Italy. Charlemagne's real exploits in Germany where he defeated the Saxons, and in Italy where he overthrew the Lombards, were not forgotten; but the romancers delighted in celebrating his expedition to Spain, despite its calamitous issue. The reason is not far to seek.

The Moors stood in the same relation to the Emperor's Frankish chivalry as the Saracens afterwards stood to the Christians. Hence it was easy for writers to invest their narrative with associations and sentiments which had grown up during the Crusades." (Snell.)

The particular legend of Roland (translated by the Italians into Orlando) grew out of the battle of Roncesvalles, in August, 778 A.D. Although not even mentioned in the original history of Archbishop Turpin, Roland became the hero of a version revised by a monk of Vienne. This pseudo-Turpin relates Roland's bravery, the episode of his far-resounding horn, of his battle with the giant Ferracute (Ariosto's Ferrau), Ganelon's treachery and Charlemagne's later vengeance on the Saracens. The "Chanson de Roland"* not only told of Turpin's own fate, but added a second hero to Roland in Oliver. Roland falls in love with Oliver's sister, Aude, and fights a duel with Oliver. Roland's sword is named "Durendal." In Italy, however, this legend was to be most glorified. Nicolas of Padua (1320) wrote an elaborate romance concerning the "Entree en Espagne" (Entry into Spain), and its sequel, "La Prise de Pampelune" (Taking of Pampeluna). These romances formed the groundwork for Sagna's "Rotta di Roncesvalle" (Defeat at Roncesvalles). Besides this there was a prose harmony of this Cycle of Charles the Great, entitled "Reali di Francia" (The Frankish Royalty). At last Pulci lifted these despised vernacular romances from the popular level into courtly style. Orlando (Roland), the hero, is now made the nephew of Charlemagne. Portions of Pulci's epic are so extravagant, so grotesque, so bizarre, that the idea has inevitably occurred that the poet nourished a design similar to that of Cervantes, and in reality was merely mocking at the institutions of chivalry. The "Orlando Innamorato" of his successor Boiardo is graver in style and loftier in spirit; the angry warrior is transformed into the enamored lover of Angelica, an infidel princess of exquisite beauty and consummate coquetry. Angelica retires to a castle in Cathay where she is besieged by Agricane, a fabulous king of Tartary, who is defeated and killed by Orlando. The style of this epic was too labored and heavy to suit the masses, for whom the flippant Berni made a new version of the poem, that appeared almost simultaneously with Ariosto's greater work. Curiously enough, Ariosto, who was to continue and eclipse Boiardo, was a son of a governor of the citadel of Reggio, who had superseded Boiardo in that post. He was also, like Boiardo, a courtier of the house of Este at Ferrara. Nevertheless, the only acknowledgment given by Cardinal Ippolito of Este to the poet's verses was the patronizing remark: "Where did you find so many stories, Master Ludovic?" Yet Ariosto was once spared by the bandits of the Apennines in honor of his great masterpiece. The courtier poet lived and died in poverty. After his death it was claimed that Charles V. had crowned him.

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* See Volume I., pp. 199–204.

Ariosto filed and polished his epic, "Orlando Furioso," to the day of his death. The Italian ottava (octave) stanza attained in him the highest perfection of grace, variety and harmony. The epic was first published in 1516 in forty cantos, afterwards increased to forty-six. The plot of Ariosto's poem begins at a point before Boiardo's unfinished epic ends. The hero of "Orlando Furioso" is in reality the Saracen knight, Rogero (Ruggiero), who receives baptism for the sake of his love for Bradamante, sister of Rinaldo. The narrative of their love is elegantly recited, as well as Bradamante's fight in armor in a duel with her own knight. She has an enchanted spear. Corneille wrote later a drama on this episode. Full of poetic beauties are the descriptions by Ariosto of the death of the Duke Zerbino, the complaints of Isabella, his wife, the discord among the Saracens, and the love of Rogero and Bradamante. In the end, Orlando, mad for his love of Angelica, has his wits brought back from the moon in a phial by the Scotch magician Astolfo, who also has a horn with which he can destroy whole armies at a blast. Ariosto's epic has been translated into English by Sir John Harington and by William Stewart Rose. Our extracts are from the latter.

THE MADNESS OF ORLANDO.

HERE from his horse Orlando lit,
And at the entrance of the grot surveyed
A cloud of words, which seemed but newly writ,
And which the young Medoro's hand had made.
On the great pleasure he had known in it,
This sentence he in verses had arrayed;
Which in his tongue, I deem, might make pretence
To polished phrase; and such in ours the sense:

"Gay plants, green herbage, rill of limpid vein,
And, grateful with cool shade, thou gloomy cave,
Where oft, by many wooed with fruitless pain,
Beauteous Angelica, the child of grave
King Galaphron, within my arms has lain;
For the convenient harborage you gave,
I, poor Medoro, can but in my lays,
As recompense, forever sing your praise;

"And any loving lord devoutly pray,
Damsel and cavalier, and every one,
Whom choice or fortune hither shall convey,
Stranger or native,—to this crystal run,
Shade, caverned rock, and grass, and plants, to say,
'Benignant be to you the fostering sun
And moon, and may the choir of nymphs provide
That never swain his flock may hither guide!'"

In Arabic was writ the blessing said,
Known to Orlando like the Latin tongue,
Who, versed in many languages, best read
Was in this speech; which oftentimes from wrong,
And injury, and shame, had saved his head
What time he roved the Saracens among.
But let him boast not of its former boot,
O'erbalanced by the present bitter fruit.

Three times, and four, and six, the lines impressed
Upon the stone that wretch perused, in vain
Seeking another sense than was expressed,
And ever saw the thing more clear and plain;

And all the while, within his troubled breast,
He felt an icy hand his heart-core strain.
With mind and eyes close fastened on the block
At length he stood, not differing from the rock.

Then well-nigh lost all feeling,—so a prey
Wholly was he to that o'ermastering woe.
This is a pang—believe the experienced say
Of him who speaks—which does all griefs outgo.
His pride had from his forehead passed away,
His chin had fallen upon his breast below;
Nor found he—so grief barred each natural vent—
Moisture for tears, or utterance for lament.

Stifled within, the impetuous sorrow stays,
Which would too quickly issue; so to abide
Water is seen, imprisoned in the vase
Whose neck is narrow and whose swell is wide:
What time, when one turns up the inverted base,
Towards the mouth so hastes the hurrying tide,
And in the strait encounters such a stop,
It scarcely works a passage, drop by drop,

He somewhat to himself returned and thought
How, possibly, the thing might be untrue;
That some one (so he hoped, desired, and sought
To think) his lady would with shame pursue.
Or with such weight of jealousy had wrought
To whelm his reason, as should him undo;
And that he, whosoe'er the thing had planned,
Had counterfeited passing well her hand.

With such vain hope he sought himself to cheat,
And manned some deal his spirits and awoke;
Then pressed the faithful Brigliadoro's seat,
As on the sun's retreat his sister broke.
Nor far the warrior had pursued his beat,
Ere eddying from a roof he saw the smoke,
Heard noise of dog and kine, a farm espied,
And thitherward in quest of lodging hied.

Languid he lit, and left his Brigliador
To a discreet attendant: one undressed

His limbs, one doffed the golden spurs he wore,
And one bore off, to clean, his iron vest.
This was the homestead where the young Medore
Lay wounded, and was here supremely blessed.
Orlando here, with other food unfed,
Having supped full of sorrow, sought his bed.

The more the wretched sufferer seeks for ease,
He finds but so much more distress and pain;
Who everywhere the loathed handwriting sees,
On wall, and door, and window: he would fain
Question his host of this, but holds his peace,
Because, in sooth, he dreads too clear, too plain,
To make the thing, and this would rather shroud,
That it may less offend him, with a cloud.

Little availed the count his self-deceit,
For there was one who spake of it unsought;
The shepherd swain, who, to allay the heat,
With which he saw his guest so troubled, thought
The tale which he was wonted to repeat,—
Of the two lovers,—to each listener taught,
A history which many loved to hear.
He now, without reserve, 'gan tell the peer,

How, at Angelica's persuasive prayer,
He to his farm had carried young Medore,
Grievously wounded with an arrow; where,
In little space, she healed the angry sore.
But while she exercised this pious care,
Love in her heart the lady wounded more,
And kindled from small spark so fierce a fire,
She burnt all over, restless with desire:

Nor thinking she of mightiest king was born,
Who ruled in the East, nor of her heritage,
Forced by too puissant love, had thought no scorn
To be the consort of a poor foot-page.
His story done, to them in proof was borne
The gem, which in reward for harborage
To her extended in that kind abode,
Angelica, at parting, had bestowed.

A deadly axe was this unhappy close,
  Which, at a single stroke, lopped off the head;
When satiate with innumerable blows,
  That cruel hangman, Love, his hate had fed.
Orlando studied to conceal his woes;
  And yet the mischief gathered force and spread,
And would break out perforce in tears and sighs,
Would he, or would he not, from mouth and eyes.

When he can give the rein to raging woe,
  Alone by others' presence unrepressed,
From his full eyes the tears descending flow,
  In a wide stream, and flood his troubled breast.
'Mid sob and groan, he tosses to and fro
  About his weary bed, in search of rest;
And vainly shifting, harder than a rock
And sharper than a nettle found its flock.

Amid the pressure of such cruel pain,
  It passed into the wretched sufferer's head,
That oft the ungrateful lady must have lain,
  Together with her leman, on that bed;
Nor less he loathed the couch in his disdain,
  Nor from the down upstarted with less dread,
Than churl who, when about to close his eyes,
Springs from the turf, if he a serpent spies.

In him, forthwith, such deadly hatred breed
  That bed, that house, that swain, he will not stay
Till the morn break, or till the dawn succeed,
  Whose twilight goes before approaching day.
In haste Orlando takes his arms and steed,
  And to the deepest greenwood wends his way;
And when assured that he is there alone,
Gives utterance to his grief in shriek and groan.

Never from tears, never from sorrowing,
  He paused: nor found he peace by night or day:
He fled from town, in forest harboring,
  And in the open air on hard earth lay.
He marvelled at himself, how such a spring
  Of water from his eyes could stream away,

And breath was for so many sobs supplied—
And thus ofttimes, amid his mourning, cried:

"These are no longer real tears which rise,
  And which I scatter from so full a vein:
Of tears my ceaseless sorrow lacked supplies;
  They stopped, when to mid-height scarce rose my pain.
The vital moisture rushing to my eyes,
  Driven by the fire within me, now would gain
A vent: and it is this which I expend,
And which my sorrows and my life will end.

"No; these, which are the index of my woes,
  These are not sighs, nor sighs are such; they fail
At times, and have their season of repose.
  I feel my breast can never less exhale
Its sorrow: Love, who with his pinions blows
  The fire about my heart, creates this gale.
Love, by what miracle dost thou contrive,
It wastes not in the fire thou keep'st alive?

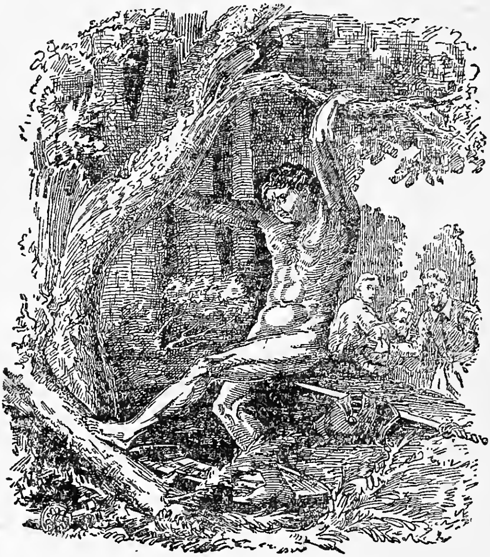
"I am not—am not what I seem to sight:
  What Roland was is dead and underground,
Slain by that most ungrateful lady's spite,
  Whose faithlessness inflicted such a wound.
Divided from the flesh, I am his sprite,
  Which, in this hell, tormented, walks its round,
To be but in its shadow left above,
A warning to all such as trust in Love."

All night about the forest roved the count,
  And, at the break of daily light, was brought
By his unhappy fortune to the fount,
  Where his inscription young Medoro wrought.
To see his wrongs inscribed upon that mount
  Inflamed his fury so, in him was naught
But turned to hatred, frenzy, rage, and spite;
Nor paused he more, but bared his falchion bright;—

Cleft through the writing, and the solid block
  Into the sky in tiny fragments sped.
Woe worth each sapling and that caverned rock,
  Where "Medore and Angelica" were read!

So scathed, that they to shepherd or to flock
Thenceforth shall never furnish shade or bed.
And that sweet fountain, late so clear and pure,
From such tempestuous wrath was ill secure.

For he turf, stone, and trunk, and shoot, and lop,
Cast without cease into the beauteous source;
Till, turbid from the bottom to the top,
Never again was clear the troubled course.
At length, for lack of breath compelled to stop,—
When he is bathed in sweat and wasted force,
Serves not his fury more,—he falls and lies
Upon the mead, and, gazing upward, sighs.



Wearied and wo-begone, he fell to the ground,
And turned his eyes toward heaven; nor spake he aught,
Nor ate, nor slept, till in his daily round
The golden sun had broken thrice, and sought
His rest anew; nor ever ceased his wound
To rankle, till it marred his sober thought.
At length, impelled by frenzy, the fourth day,
He from his limbs tore plate and mail away.

Here was his helmet, there his shield bestowed;
His arms far off; and farther than the rest,

His cuirass; through the greenwood wide was strewed
  All his good gear, in fine: and next his vest
He rent; and, in his fury, naked showed
  His shaggy paunch, and all his back and breast,
And 'gan that frenzy act, so passing dread,
Of stranger folly never shall be said.

So fierce his rage, so fierce his fury grew,
  That all obscured remained the warrior's spright;
Nor, for forgetfulness, his sword he drew,
  Or wondrous deeds I trow, had wrought the knight.
But neither this, nor bill nor axe to hew,
  Was needed by Orlando's peerless might.
He of his prowess gave high proofs and full,
Who a tall pine uprooted at a pull.

THE DUEL OF ROGERO AND BRADAMANT.

LEO will enter not Paris; but nigh
  Pitches his broad pavilions on the plain;
And his arrival by an embassy
  Makes known that day to royal Charlemagne.
Well pleased is he; and visits testify
  And many gifts the monarch's courteous vein.
His journey's cause the Grecian prince displayed,
And to dispatch his suit the sovereign prayed:

"To send afield the damsel, who denied
  Ever to take in wedlock any lord
Weaker than her: for she should be his bride,
  Or he would perish by the lady's sword."
Charles undertook for this; and, on her side,
  The following day upon the listed sward
Before the walls, in haste enclosed that night,
Appeared the martial maid, equipped for fight.

Rogero passed the night before the day
  Wherein by him the battle should be done,
Like that which felon spends, condemned to pay
  Life's forfeit with the next succeeding sun:
He made his choice to combat in the fray
  All armed; because he would discovery shun:

Nor barded steed he backed, nor lance he shook;
Nor other weapon than his falchion took.

No lance he took: yet was it not through fear
  Of that which Argalia whilom swayed,
Astolpho's next, then hers, that in career
  Her foemen ever upon earth had laid:
Because none weened such force was in the spear,
  Nor that it was by necromancy made;
Excepting royal Galaphron alone,
Who had it forged, and gave it to his son.

Nay, bold Astolpho, and the lady who
  Afterwards bore it, deemed that not to spell,
But simply to their proper force, was due
  The praise that they in knightly joust excel;
And with whatever spear they fought, those two
  Believed that they should have performed as well.
What only makes that knight the joust forego,
Is that he would not his Frontino show.

For easily that steed of generous kind
  She might have known, if him she had espied,
Whom in Montalban, long to her consigned,
  The gentle damsel had been wont to ride.
Rogero, that but schemes, but hath in mind
  How he from Bradamant himself shall hide,
Neither Frontino nor yet other thing,
Whereby he may be known, afield will bring.

With a new sword will he the maid await;
  For well he knew against the enchanted blade
As soft as paste would prove all mail and plate:
  For never any steel its fury stayed;
And heavily with hammer, to rebate
  Its edge, as well he on this falchion laid.
So armed, Rogero in the lists appeared,
When the first dawn of day the horizon cheered.

To look like Leo, o'er his breast is spread
  The surcoat that the prince is wont to wear;
And the gold eagle with its double head
  He, blazoned on the crimson shield, doth bear;

And (what the Child's disguisement well may stead)
  Of equal size and stature are the pair.
In the other's form presents himself the one;
That other lets himself be seen of none.

Dordona's martial maid is of a vein
  Right different from the gentle youth's, who sore
Hammers and blunts the falchion's tempered grain,
  Lest it his opposite should cleave or bore.
She whets her steel, and into it would fain
  Enter, that stripling to the quick to gore:
Yea, would such fury to her strokes impart,
That each should go directly to his heart.

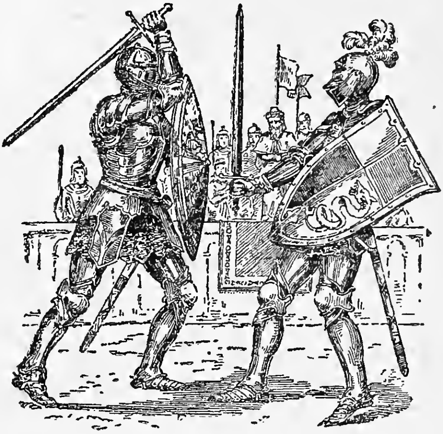
As on the start the generous barb is spied,
  When he the signal full of fire attends;
And paws now here, now there; and opens wide
  His nostrils, and his pointed ears extends;
So the bold damsel, to the lists defied,
  Who knows not with Rogero she contends,
Seemed to have fire within her veins, nor found
Resting-place, waiting for the trumpet's sound.

As sometimes after thunder sudden wind
  Turns the sea upside down; and far and nigh
Dim clouds of dust the cheerful daylight blind,
  Raised in a thought from earth, and whirled heaven-high;
Scud beasts and herd together with the hind,
  And into hail and rain dissolves the sky;
So she upon the signal bared her brand,
And fell on her Rogero, sword in hand.

But well-built wall, strong tower, or aged oak,
  No more are moved by blasts that round them rave,
No more by furious sea is moved the rock,
  Smote day and night by the tempestuous wave,
Than in those arms, secure from hostile stroke,
  Which erst to Trojan Hector Vulcan gave,
Moved was he by that ire and hatred rank
Which stormed about his head, and breast, and flank.

Now aims that martial maid a trenchant blow,
  And now gives point; and wholly is intent

'Twixt plate and plate to reach her hated foe;
  So that her stifled fury she may vent:
Now on this side, now that, now high, now low,
  She strikes, and circles him, on mischief bent;
And evermore she rages and repines,
As balked of every purpose she designs.



As he that layeth siege to well-walled town,
  And flanked about with solid bulwarks, still
Renews the assault; now fain would batter down
  Gateway or tower; now gaping fosse would fill;
Yet vainly toils (for entrance is there none)
  And wastes his host, aye frustrate of his will;
So sore toils and strives without avail
The damsel, nor can open plate or mail.

Sparks now his shield, now helm, now cuirass scatter,
  While straight and back strokes, aimed now low, now high,
Which good Rogero's head and bosom batter
  And arms, by thousands and by thousands fly
Faster than on the sounding farm-roof patter
  Hailstones descending from a troubled sky.
Rogero, at his ward, with dexterous care,
Defends himself, and ne'er offends the fair.

Now stopped, now circled, now retired the knight,
  And oft his hand his foot accompanied;

And lifted shield and shifted sword in fight,
  Where shifting he the hostile hand espied.
Either he smote her not, or—did he smite—
  Smote, where he deemed least evil would betide.
The lady, ere the westering sun descend,
Desires to bring that duel to an end.

Of the edict she remembered her, and knew
  Her peril, save the foe was quickly sped:
For if she took not in one day nor slew
  Her claimant, she was taken; and his head
Phœbus was now about to hide from view,
  Nigh Hercules' pillars, in his watery bed,
When first she 'gan misdoubt her power to cope
With that strong foe, and to abandon hope.

By how much more hope fails the damsel, so
  Much more her anger waxes; she her blows
Redoubling, yet the harness of her foe
  Will break, which through that day unbroken shows;
As he, that at his daily drudgery slow,
  Sees night on his unfinished labor close,
Hurries and toils and moils without avail,
Till wearied strength and light together fail.

Didst thou, O miserable damsel, trow
  Whom thou wouldst kill, if in that cavalier
Matched against thee thou didst Rogero know,
  On whom depend thy very life-threads, ere
Thou killed him thou wouldst kill thyself; for thou,
  I know, dost hold him than thyself more dear;
And when he for Rogero shall be known,
I know these very strokes thou wilt bemoan.

King Charles and peers him, sheathed in plate and shell,
  Deem not Rogero, but the emperor's son;
And viewing in that combat fierce and fell
  Such force and quickness by the stripling shown;
And, without e'er offending her, how well
  That knight defends himself, now change their tone;
Esteem both well assorted; and declare
The champions worthy of each other are.

When Phœbus wholly under water goes,
  Charlemagne bids the warring pair divide,
And Bradamant (nor boots it to oppose)
  Allots to youthful Leo as a bride.
Not there Rogero tarried to repose;
  Nor loosed his armor, nor his helm untied:
On a small hackney, hurrying sore, he went
Where Leo him awaited in his tent.

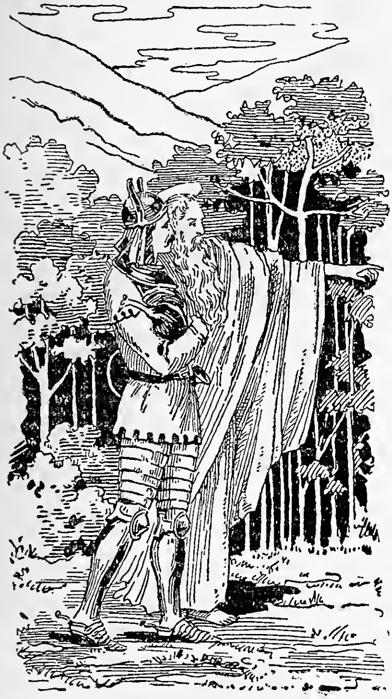
Twice in fraternal guise and oftener threw
  Leo his arms about the cavalier;
And next his helmet from his head withdrew,
  And kissed him on both cheeks with loving cheer.
"I would," he cried, "that thou wouldst ever do
  By me what pleaseth thee; for thou wilt ne'er
Weary my love: at my call I lend
To thee myself and state; these freely spend;

"Nor see I recompense, which can repay
  The mighty obligation that I owe;
Though of the garland I should disarray
  My brows, and upon thee that gift bestow."
Rogero, on whom his sorrows press and prey,
  Who loathes his life, immersed in that deep woe,
Little replies; the ensigns he had worn
Returns, and takes again his unicorn;

And showing himself spiritless and spent,
  From thence as quickly as he could withdrew,
And from young Leo's to his lodgings went;
  When it was midnight, armed himself anew,
Saddled his horse, and sallied from his tent;
  (He takes no leave, and none his going view);
And his Frontino to that road addressed,
Which seemed to please the goodly courser best.

THE VALLEY OF LOST LUMBER.

ASTOLFO rides to the moon on the winged hippogriff to recover for Orlando the wits which he had lost for love of the Princess Angelica.



Astolfo was conducted by his guide to a narrow valley between two steep mountains. Here was miraculously collected everything which had been lost on earth, either through some human failing or by the fault of time or fortune—not only riches and power, but also those things which fortune alone can neither give nor take away. Many a reputation lies up there, which time, like a moth, has long been gnawing at here below, and also numberless vows and good resolutions made by sinners. There we should find the tears and sighs of lovers, the time lost in gaming, all the wasted leisure of ignorant men, and all vain intentions which have never been put into action. Of fruitless desires there are so many that they lumber up the greater part of that place. In short, whatever you have lost here below you will find again if you ascend thither.

Our Paladin, as he passed along, now and again asking questions of his guide, saw a mountain of blown bladders, which seemed to be full of noise inside. And he knew that these were the ancient crowns of the Assyrians, and of Lydia, and of the Persians and Greeks, which once were famous, while now their very names are almost forgotten. Close by he saw great masses of gold and silver piled up in heaps, which were those gifts that people made, in hopes of getting a reward, to kings and princes. He saw wreaths of flowers with traps hidden among them, and on asking, heard that they were flatteries. Verses that men made in praise of their patrons are seen there, under the form of grasshoppers who have hurt themselves with chirping. . . . . He saw many broken bottles of different kinds, and found that they stand for the service men pay to courts, and the thanks they get for it. Then he came to a great pool of spilt broth, and asking what it was, his guide told him that it represented the alms people direct to be given after their deaths. Then he passed by a great heap of various flowers, which once were sweet-scented, but now have a foul odor; this was the gift (if we may be permitted to say so) that Constantine bestowed on the good Pope Sylvester.

He saw a great quantity of twigs covered with bird-lime; there, O fair ladies, is your beauty! He saw . . . but it would be an endless task to count up the things which were shown him there. The only thing he did not find was folly: that remains here on earth, for no one ever parts with it. At last he came to that which we are all so firmly persuaded we possess, that no one ever prayed to have it given him—I mean common sense. There was a huge heap of it, as big as all the other things put together. It was like a clear, soft liquid, which easily evaporates if it is not kept tightly corked, and was contained in bottles of various shapes and sizes, each one being labelled with the name of its owner. Astolfo noticed one which was much larger than the rest, and read on the label, "*Orlando's Wits.*" He also saw a great part of his own; but what made him marvel more than any thing else was the fact that many people whom he had believed to have plenty of sense were now shown to have little or none, the bottles marked with their names being nearly full. Some lose it through love, others in striving after honors; yet others in seeking for riches by land and sea, or by putting their trust in great lords and princes, or in pursuing after follies of magic and sorcery, or gems or pictures, or any thing else which a man values above others. There was a great quantity of the wits of philosophers and astrologers stored there, and also of those of poets. Astolfo took up his own, having received permission to do so, and put the flask to his nose; and it appears that his wits returned to their place right enough, for Turpin confesses that from thenceforth Astolfo lived very wisely indeed for a long time. But afterwards, it is true, he made one mistake which once more deprived him of his brains. Then he took up the large flask which contained Orlando's, and which was no light weight, and turned to depart. . . .

GIOVAMBATTISTA GIRALDI CINTHIO.

CINTHIO deserves note not only as one of the most voluminous Italian novelists of the sixteenth century, but as the author of the story which furnished Shakespeare with the plot for his tragedy of "Othello." He was a noble of Ferrara, and wrote the "Hecatomithi," or Hundred Fables (1565). After the manner of Boccaccio, he feigned that these tales were told by a party of ladies and gentlemen fleeing from a pestilence which had followed the famous sack of Rome. With all their revolting incidents and labored style, these tales possess a powerful and dramatic interest. Cinthio's tragic stories abound in dark atrocities and terrific extravagance. He ransacked the catalogue of human crimes. The entire third decade is devoted to the theme of the infidelity of wives and husbands.

In regard to his story of "Othello," Thomas Roscoe has aptly pointed out wherein Shakespeare has generally improved upon the novelist. "In the drama Iago is actuated to revenge by jealousy and resentment arising from Cassio's promotion; while in the novel he is merely influenced by love turned into hatred. In Shakespeare the villain employs his wife to steal the handkerchief, but in the Italian this deed is performed by himself. The noble character of Othello is also wholly of the poet's creation, he being drawn by the novelist with the vulgar features of a morose, selfish, and cruel husband." Nevertheless Shakespeare has borrowed almost entirely the characters of Desdemona, Cassio and Iago, while "the gradual and artful method pursued by Iago of infusing suspicions, like a slow poison, into the noble nature of Othello, is closely copied from the novelist.'' The fifth novel of Cinthio's eighth decade suggested to Shakespeare the comedy of "Measure for Measure."

The Faithful Wife.

At the period when the King of France appointed the celebrated Giovanni Trivulzi governor of Milan, the capital city of Lombardy, a certain noble youth resided there of the name of Giovanni Panigarola, whose bold and fiery temper involved him in frequent disputes, both with the soldiers and the citizens, to the no slight interruption of the public peace. This unruly disposition having more than once caused him to be brought before the governor at the instance of several individuals with whom he had been engaged, he would probably have incurred the punishment due to his indiscretion, had not the venerable Trivulzi been more desirous of reforming offenders than of punishing them. Discharging him merely with a severe reprimand, out of regard to the feelings of the youth's family and friends, he trusted that he should hear of him no more. But this unfortunately was not the case; the perverse and ungrateful youth still pursuing the same perilous career in spite of the entreaties and reproaches of his best friends. Even his union with a pleasing and accomplished young lady of Lampogiani, named Philippa, failed to convince him of the folly of his conduct; her tenderness and anxiety were lavished upon him in vain, and she lived in daily expectation of hearing of some calamitous event. Though he always treated her with the utmost kindness and affection, she would rather have been herself the victim of his quarrelsome and unhappy disposition, than have heard of his indulging it at the expense of others, and at the imminent risk of his own life. Unable to support this incessant anxiety, the fond Philippa would frequently conjure him to abstain from thus wantonly hazarding his reputation and her own repose, for the sake of encouraging so idle and dangerous a propensity, which cost her so many tears. Then throwing her fair arms around him, she declared that she could not live long under the torments she endured on his behalf, being in hourly dread of beholding him borne homewards a lifeless corpse. "I had rather," she exclaimed, "that you would at once pierce my bosom with your sword than listen to the sad accounts I am daily expecting to hear from you, so derogatory to your own honor and the name you bear, and frequently, I fear, so unjust towards the objects of your resentment. I entreat you, therefore, by our long attachment, by all my unutterable love and devotion to you, that, if you have any pity or gentleness in your nature, you will henceforth become more reasonable, and avoid occasions of embroiling yourself with others, consent to lead the blameless and honorable life for which your abilities and your connections are in every way so well calculated to qualify you. Then, and then only, shall I consider myself truly happy, blest with your society, and enjoying the honor and respectability of your name."

Whilst listening to the kind and judicious words of her he loved, Giovanni sincerely promised reformation, and believed that he could renounce all his errors, and never more give her reason to complain. But when he was again exposed to temptations, when his boon companions repeatedly invited him, and, half-mad with wine, he received imaginary insults from the guests, borne away by the force of his habitual passions, he quickly gave or as quickly received offence. About this time the kind governor, Trivulzi, was called to France, and one of a more severe and implacable disposition soon after assumed his place. Nor was it long before the luckless Giovanni embroiled himself in a hot dispute with an officer of the governor's guards, until, proceeding from words to blows, they drew their daggers, and his adversary in a few seconds lay dead at Giovanni's feet. He was speedily secured by several other officers who had witnessed the fact, and being carried before the new governor, was condemned on the following day to lose his head. When these tidings reached the ears of his poor wife, so far from being prepared by all her former fears for so fatal an occurrence, she gave way to the extremity of wretchedness and despair. Inveighing against the cruelty of the governor, her own and her husband's unhappy fate, she beat her bosom, she tore her hair, and refused the consolations of her nearest relatives. "I will not be comforted!" she exclaimed, in a tone of agony; "you do not, you cannot know, the sufferings I endure; and may God, in his infinite mercy, grant that none of you ever may! Away, away, then, and attempt not to assuage the burning agony I feel. It is worse than death, and death I could suffer a thousand times rather than my husband should thus wretchedly and ignominiously end his days."

Fearing lest she might be induced by the excess of her feelings to put an end to her existence, her friends were unwilling to leave her for a moment alone; yet finding their attempts to console her were vain, they stood silently about her couch until the object of their solicitude, having wearied herself with her lamentations, came at length to the resolution of either saving her beloved husband or perishing in the attempt. With this view she declared to her friends around her, that the only means of mitigating her sorrow would be to procure for her a final interview with her husband, that she might at least have the sad consolation of bidding him an eternal farewell. Compassionating her forlorn condition they all united in soliciting their husbands and brothers to endeavor to obtain this favor from the governor; and it was permitted that during that night she might share the unhappy youth's imprisonment.

Great was the emotion experienced on both sides when they met: she threw herself into his arms, and her tender reproaches half died away on her lips. "Alas! alas! to what a state has your inconsiderate conduct reduced us! Have I lived to hear that to-morrow you are condemned to suffer death, and that I am doomed to live in the consciousness of such a sad and widowed lot! Ah, why did you not sooner yield to the repeated entreaties and reproaches of your unhappy wife? Did I not tell you that some fatal consequences would be sure, sooner or later, to follow? It is come, and you have sacrificed life upon life to your wicked and infatuated career. It is enough; and we have now to pay the forfeit of all your folly and of all——I fear, alas! I fear to speak it to one who should have time to repent ere yet he die;" and her sobs here interrupting her voice, she gave way to a fresh burst of sorrow. He who had before appeared unmoved and collected was now melted even to tears on witnessing the deep sorrow of his wife, knowing how fondly she was attached to him, and how ill able she was to sustain the sorrows in store for her. "My own Philippa," he cried, gently raising her up, "I am sorry for you from the bottom of my soul; but try to calm yourself: why distress yourself thus for me? You see I am not terrified at the fate which awaits me. I had rather thus die for having conducted myself valiantly against the brutal wretch who insulted me, than live ignominiously among my fellow-citizens under the control of the soldiers who domineer over us. One at least has paid the forfeit of his crime. Console yourself, therefore, my Philippa, seeing that I die honorably, and not like a false traitor or a bandit, but in the noble attempt to tame the ferocity of those who too nearly resemble them. It was the slave of the cruel governor who first provoked me to do the deed; nor could I have received the insulting language he made use of without covering myself with eternal infamy. Then mourn not over my fate; approve yourself worthy of my love; and as you have ever shown yourself a sweet and obedient wife, so even now obey me in summoning fortitude and patience to bear our lot;" and kissing her tenderly, he sought to console her by every means in his power. But his kindness seemed only to increase her grief; she declared that she should never be able to survive the affliction of losing him thus, and that she was resolved to save him or perish in the attempt. "Therefore," she continued, "am I come; and as I trust that the sufferings we have experienced in this trying scene will have made some impression on your mind, instead of further indulging these womanish complaints, we will summon fortitude to avail ourselves of the last resource which fortune has left in our power." "How! what is it you mean?" inquired her astonished husband. "That you should hasten to avoid the fate prepared for you by disguising yourself in these clothes, which I have brought hither for the purpose. Lose not a moment, for as we are nearly of the same age, and I am not much lower in stature than you, the deception will not easily be detected, and in my dress you may make your escape. The guards are all newly appointed and unacquainted with your person. Once safe yourself, indulge not the least anxiety about me. I am innocent, and, vindictive as he may be, the governor will not venture to shed innocent blood." "We cannot tell that," replied Giovanni, "and the very possibility of it is sufficient to make me decline your kind and noble-hearted offer. Should he even threaten you with death, my Philippa, the governor would be certain to have me in his hands again to-morrow. So say no more of this, my love," he continued, as he kissed away her fast-falling tears, "and do not believe that I would thus vilely fly, as if I were afraid to meet my fate. What will the world, what will my dearest friends and fellow-citizens say, when they hear that I have absconded at the risk of your life, and thus confirmed the worst reports of my adversaries? No, Philippa, never! let me here terminate my restless days rather than in any way endanger yours, which are far more precious in my eyes."

But the affliction and despair exhibited by his gentle wife on hearing these words were such as may be easier imagined than expressed; nor did she cease uttering the most wild and incoherent lamentations, until, entertaining fears for her reason, he retracted his purpose and promised to favor her design. And as she now assisted him, between sobs and smiles, to assume his female attire, she declared that she could have borne the thought of his death fighting bravely in the field, or in any way except by the hands of the public executioner. "It would then," said she, "have been my duty to support myself; but the very idea of your dear life being thus thrown away, like a wild weed, would have embittered all my future existence. For I recollect having frequently heard my honored father say, and he was one of the most valiant and high-minded of our citizens, that the truly brave ought never to shun death when a noble occasion offers of serving either their country or their friends, but that it must be truly grievous to the wretch who is compelled to meet it unsupported by any generous enterprise or any sense of honor. And alas! I fear you would at last feel yourself too much in the latter situation; and for myself, I should doubly feel it. So now, dearest love, I entreat you to use every precaution in your power to avoid discovery and effect your escape; breathe not a syllable to any one till you are beyond the reach of danger; consent not to gratify the cruelty of the governor, but save yourself for more honorable enterprises, which may confound the malice of your enemies;" and saying this, she conjured him to hasten away.

Taking a hasty farewell, therefore, Giovanni bound his cloak more closely about him, and presented himself, just as the morning dawned, before the sentinels of the prison. Believing him to be the lady on her return from her husband, he was allowed to pass without examination or suspicion. In the morning the officers entered the prison to bind the hands of the culprit and lead him forth to execution, when the lady, turning suddenly round upon them, inquired, with an air of authority, whether they had been commissioned to treat her with this indignity. On discovering her sex, and after searching every part of the prison for the real offender in vain, the governor was immediately made acquainted with the truth. He ordered her to be instantly conducted into his presence, in the utmost rage at the idea of having been thus overreached by a woman; and so far from commiserating her situation, he threatened her with the severest punishment, declaring that her life should answer for his, and commanding the officers upon their duty to proceed to the place of execution. Thither then the devoted wife was carried, in spite of her tears and entreaties and those of the surrounding people, among whom tidings of the fact having quickly gone forth, a vast concourse of each sex and of all ages were speedily assembled. Mingled sorrow and admiration were depicted on every countenance, and each manly breast burned with admiration of a woman of such exalted fidelity and truth, and with a wish to rescue her from so unmerited a doom. But everywhere surrounded by the tyrant's satellites, the wretched lady, invoking the name of her husband, and appealing for justice and mercy in vain, now approached the scene of her execution, and, amidst the horror and indignation of the spectators, was on the point of sealing her unexampled fidelity with her life. At this moment a loud cry was heard amongst the spectators, a sword flashed above the heads of the people, and the tumult approaching nearer, Giovanni issued from the crowd, and the next moment had rescued his beloved wife from the soldiers' hands. Yet fearful lest any act of violence might involve them both in the same fate, he instantly surrendered his sword, and embracing his weeping wife, said, "Did I not tell you that I would never permit you to fall a victim to your incomparable generosity and truth? Unhand her, wretches!" he cried, turning towards the officers; "I am your prisoner, and those bonds are only mine." "No! obey the governor's commands," cried the lady; "it is I who am sentenced to suffer; venture not to dispute his orders. No, I will not be released," she continued, as they were about to set her free; and a scene of mutual tenderness and devotion then took place which drew tears from the hardest heart.

In the meantime the governor, having heard of the arrival of Giovanni, with the same unrelenting cruelty gave orders that both should be executed on the spot, the husband for the homicide he had committed, and his consort for effecting the release of the criminal from prison. The indignation of the citizens on hearing this inhuman sentence could no longer be controlled. An instantaneous attack was made upon the soldiers and officers of the guard, who were prevented from proceeding with their cruel purpose, while numbers rushed towards the mansion of the governor, declaring that they would have justice, and insisting that the whole affair should be laid before the king. Though highly enraged at this popular interference with his sanguinary measures, the governor was compelled to bend before the storm, and with evident reluctance submitted to refer the matter to his royal master. This was no other than the celebrated Francis, whose singular magnanimity, united to his pleasing and courteous manners, still render him so justly dear to the French people.

On receiving an account of the noble and generous manner in which the lady had conducted herself, and of the worth and valor of her husband, with the proofs of mutual fidelity and affection which they had displayed, King Francis, with his usual liberality and clemency, issued his commands that they should instantly, without any further proceedings, be set at liberty. He, moreover, expressed his high admiration of their mutual truth and constancy, and approved of the good feeling and spirit evinced by the Milanese people, declaring his only regret to be, that it was not in his power to render such examples of heroic worth as immortal as they deserved to be. After a more strict investigation of the unhappy affair in which Giovanni had been last engaged, it was discovered that his adversary had really been the aggressor, and had instigated him, both by words and blows, to the terrible revenge which he had taken, in prosecuting which, at the risk of his own life, he had laid the insulting soldier dead at his feet.

Great was the triumph of the people of Milan when the tidings of the pardon of the prisoners arrived, and they paraded the streets with shouts of applause in honor of King Francis, whose clemency and magnanimity failed not to add to his popularity among all ranks. Nor was the rage and disappointment of the bad governor inferior to the joy of the people upon this occasion, as he beheld the procession bearing the happy pair in triumph to their home. The inhabitants instantly despatched a deputation to the French monarch, expressing their grateful sense of his kindness, and their devoted attachment to his royal person.

Such, likewise, was the favorable impression made upon the character of Giovanni by this occurrence, that, influenced also by the excellent example of his wife, he from that period entirely abandoned the dangerous courses which he had so long pursued.

GIOVANNI FRANCESCO STRAPAROLA.

The origin of children's stories is often impossible to trace, but that of "Puss in Boots" is to a certain extent definitely known. It is found in the "Tredeci Piacevoli Notti," Thirteen Happy Nights, of Giovanni Francesco Straparola da Caravaggio, who flourished in the middle of the sixteenth century. Yet it must be noted that in his story the cat did not wear boots, those picturesque adornments being added by the French adapter. Straparola published his "Nights" at Venice in 1550–4. These seventy-four tales were fabled to have been told by a fallen prince and his friends during their cool evening gatherings at Murano (Venice). Straparola used the North Italian dialects, and his "Nights" never attained the fame of Boccaccio's "Days." Many of his characters were simple country-folk, and the whole work seems adapted to such listeners. Later dramatists and novelists availed themselves of the plots of some stories, and specimens were translated into English, but the only complete English version is that by W. G. Waters, issued at London in 1894.

A recent critic has remarked of these tales: "Their substance, whatever may be said concerning Straparola's disregard of style, is often the product of true imagination, an imagination which seized and filed the floating fairy lore of the time. The glamour of fairyland—the sun-glamour of the East, not the moon-glamour of the North—lies over many a passage. Magic lore, represented in the 'Decameron' by only two stories, that of the 'Summer Garden in Winter Snow,' and that of 'Saladin and Messer Thorelo,' in Straparola is rife. His 'Nights' are full, it may be said, of dreams. Perrault and Mme. d'Aulnoy have popularized many a one. Grimm's brilliant tale of the 'Master Thief' is identical with the Cassandrino of the first Night. The 'Grateful Dead,' episode of the eleventh Night surely lingered in Hans Andersen's memory when he invented the weird tale of the 'Fellow Traveler.' They are a mine of enchantments: fairy horses, star children, water that danced, apples that sang. There is Samaritana, the gentle snake-sister, and Biancabella, more gentle and less wise. There is the 'Fairy Doll,' and, stranger than all, the fable of the Fool, Flaminio, 'who went to seek Death and found Life, who showed him Fear and let him make trial of Death,' in which one feels a touch of northern mysticism alien to Italian sentiment. Lastly, born of Straparola's own brain—so far criticism has traced no other original—is 'Puss in Boots.' . . . Nor in the matter of romance do many incidents surpass in picturesqueness the scene of the trial by Serpent, or that of the drowning of Malgherita as, swimming towards her lover's shore, she is decoyed by the false light attached to her brother's boat, and dies exhausted in mid seas."

Italy of the Renaissance lives again in these "Nights" as in the Decameron. The old life of mixed intellectual, social and sensual pleasure is depicted amid beauteous gardens and environments of art. The "Nights" are full of color and perfume, as well as mystical moonlight. We hear, too, the echoing strains of the romantic violins, the stately old Venetian dance tune, and all the delightful music and enjoyment, mingled with saddened revery, of the Murano palace.

THIA'S INCANTATION.

ABOVE the domain of Piove de Sacco, which is, as I need hardly tell you, a territory of Padua, is situated a village called Salmazza, wherein there lived a very long time since, a peasant called Cechato Rabboso, who, though he was a fellow with a big head and body, was nevertheless a poor fool, and over-trustful of his own powers. This Rabboso had to wife the daughter of a farmer called Gagiardi, who lived in a village called Campelongo. She was a wily, crafty, mischievous young woman, named Thia. Besides being so shrewd, she was a stout wench, handsome of face, so that it was commonly said that there was not another peasant woman for miles around who could be compared with her. She was so sprightly and nimble at country dances, that young gallants who saw her would not seldom lose their hearts to her straightway. Now it happened that a certain young man, who was himself handsome and of a sturdy figure, a prosperous citizen of Padua, by name Marsilio Vercelese, became enamored of this Thia. Whenever she went to a village dance, this youth would follow her thither, and for the greater part of the time he would dance with her. Yet this young gallant kept his love a secret as well as he could, so as not to let it be known to anybody.

Marsilio, knowing quite well that Cechato, Thia's husband, was a poor man, supporting his house by the work of his hands, and laboring hard from early morning till late at night, began to prowl around Thia's house, that he might gaze upon her. One day it chanced that Thia was sitting alone on a wooden bench near the door, and holding under her arm the distaff on which some flax was wound, when Marsilio, taking courage, came forward, and said, "God be with you, friend Thia." And Thia answered: "Welcome, young gentleman!" "Do you not know," said Marsilio, "that I am consumed of love for you, and am like to die?" To this Thia answered: "How should I know whether you love me or not?" Said Marsilio, "If you never knew it before, I will now let you know that I am consumed with all the passion that a man can feel." Then he said, "And you? Tell me the truth, do you love me too?" Thia, smiling, said, "Perhaps I love you a little." Then said Marsilio, "Tell me how much." "I love you very much," said Thia. Marsilio cried, "Alas, Thia, if you really loved me as much as you say, you would show it by some sign." Thia answered, "Well, what sign would you have me give?" Marsilio said, "O Thia, you know very well without my telling you." But said Thia, "No, I cannot possibly know unless you tell me." Then said Marsilio, "I will tell you if you will listen and not be angry." Thia answered, "I promise you that if it is a good thing, and not against my honor, I will not be angered with you." Then Marsilio said, "My love, when will you let me embrace you in lovers' fashion?" "Now," replied Thia, "you are only deceiving me. How can I, a peasant girl, be fit for you, a gentleman and citizen of Padua? You are a signor, I am a working woman; you can have fine ladies to your taste, I am of low condition. You wear an embroidered coat and bright-colored hose, all worked with wool and silk, and I have nought but a torn dimity petticoat and this linen head-cloth. I have neither money nor goods to sell for our few necessaries. We have not enough to eat to keep us alive till Easter. Oh, we poor peasants! What pleasure have we in life? We toil hard to till the earth and sow the wheat which you fine folk consume, while we make the best shift we can with rye bread."

In answer to Thia's speech Marsilio said, "Do not distress yourself for this, for if you grant me your favor I will see that you want for nothing." Thia replied, "Ah, that is what you cavaliers always say until we have done your pleasure; then you go away and we never see any more of you. We are left deceived and shamed; and you go bragging of your good fortune, and treating us as if we were carrion. I know the tricks you citizens of Padua can play." Then said Marsilio, "Now let us have done with words. I ask you will you grant me the favor I desire." "Go away, for the love of God, I pray," cried Thia, "before my husband comes back, for nightfall is drawing near. Come back to-morrow, and we will talk as long as you will." But Marsilio was loath to break off this conversation, and still remained, so she cried, "Go away immediately, I beg you." Then Marsilio, seeing that she was strongly moved, cried out, "God be with you, Thia, my sweet soul! my heart is in your keeping." "May God go with you, dearest hope of my life," said Thia, "I commend you to His care." "To-morrow," said Marsilio, "by His good help, we will meet again." "Very well, be it so," said Thia, and Marsilio took his leave.

When the morrow came, Marsilio repaired to Thia's house, and found her busy digging in the garden. As soon as they saw one another, they exchanged greetings and began to talk lovingly. After a time Thia said, "Dear heart, to-morrow morning early Cechato, my husband, must go to the mill, and will not return till the next day; wherefore you may come here in the evening. I will be on the watch for you." Then Marsilio jumped and danced for very gladness, and took leave of Thia, half out of his wits for joy.

Thia went to prepare the corn and put it into sacks so that on the morrow Cechato should have nothing to do but to load the cart therewith, and to go on his way singing. On the next morning Cechato borrowed a cart with two oxen from the people for whom he worked, took the corn his wife had prepared the night before, loaded it on the cart and went toward the mill. The days were short and the nights long, the roads were broken, and the weather was foul with rain and ice, so poor Cechato found himself obliged to remain that night at the mill, and this in sooth fell in well with the plans of Thia and Marsilio.

As soon as night had fallen, Marsilio, according to his agreement, took a pair of fine capons and some white bread and good wine, and stole across the fields to Thia's house. Having opened the door, he found her sitting by the fire winding thread. After greeting each other, they spread the table and sat down to eat, and after they had made an excellent meal, they had other enjoyments. But when day was beginning to break, while they were amorously talking, Cechato drew near the house, and called, "O my Thia! make up a good fire, for I am more than half dead with cold." Thia was somewhat frightened; so she quickly opened the door, managing to let Marsilio hide himself behind it. Then she ran to meet her husband, and began to embrace him. After Cechato had come into the yard, he cried out, "Make a good fire, Thia, for I am well nigh frozen. So cold was it at the mill that I could not sleep a wink." Thia took an armful of billets to light the fire, taking care to stand so as to hide Marsilio.

Then Thia said, "Ah! Cechato, my good man, I have good news for you." "What has happened?" inquired Cechato. Thia replied, "While you were away, a poor old man came begging alms, and as a recompense for some bread and a cup of wine, he taught me an incantation to throw a spell over that greedy kite which troubles us." "What is this you are telling me?" said Cechato. Then Thia said to her husband, "You must kneel down on the ground, and turn your head and shoulders towards the door, and your knees towards the fire; I must spread a white cloth over your face, and put the corn measure over your head." "I am sure," said Cechato, "that my head will never go into our corn measure." "I am sure it will," replied Thia; "just look here!" And with these words she put the measure over his head, saying, "Nothing in the world could be a better fit. Now keep yourself quite still, and I will take our sieve in my hand and dance around you, while I speak the incantation the old man taught me. You must not stir a finger till I have repeated the incantation thrice; otherwise it will have no effect. After this we shall see whether the kite will come to steal our chickens." To this Cechato replied, "Would to God that what you say might be true, for that fiend of a kite devours every chicken we hatch."

"Let us begin quickly then," said Thia. "Now, Cechato, lie down." And Cechato straightway laid himself on the

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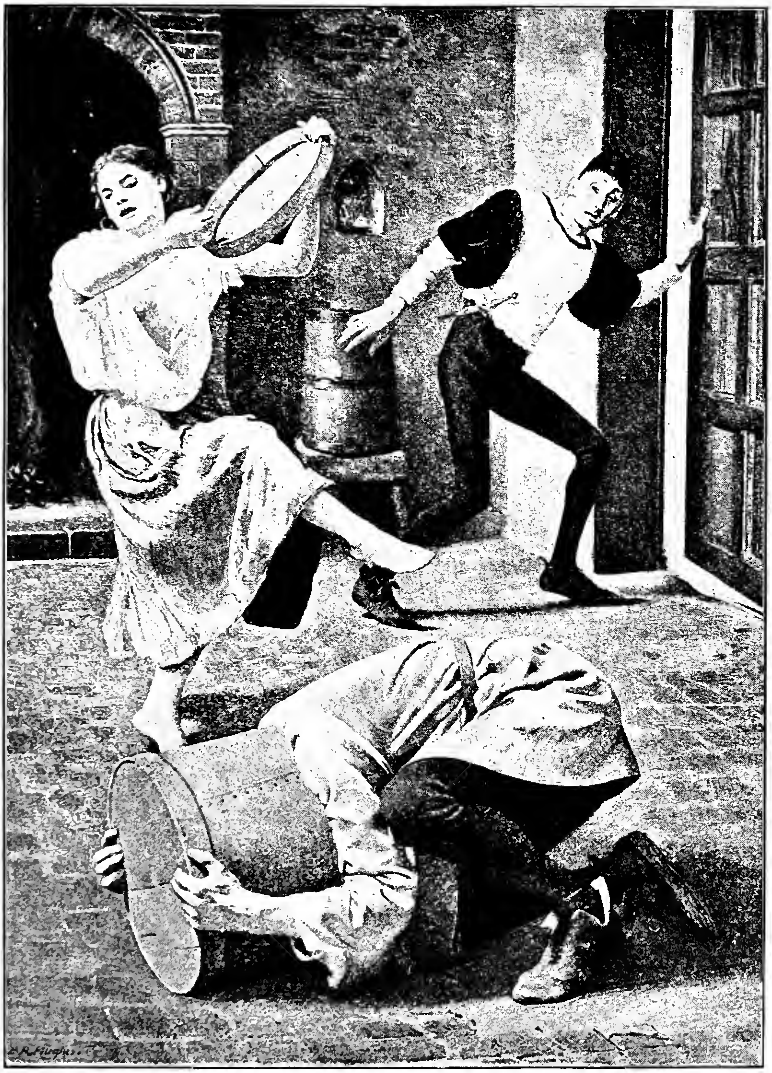


E. R. HUGHES, PINX

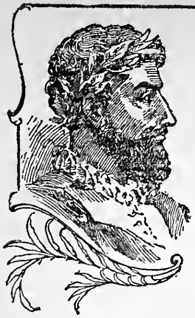
THIA'S INCANTATION

floor. "That is right," said Thia, as she covered his head with a white linen cloth. Then she rammed the corn measure on his head and caught up the sieve. Then she began to dance and skip, repeating the following incantation:

Thievish bird, I charge you well,
Hearken to my mystic spell,
While I dance and wave my sieve,
All my tender chicks shall live.
Not a bird from all my hatch,
Thievish rascal, shall you snatch.
Thieves who stand behind the door,
Hearken, fly, and come no more.
If my speech you cannot read,
Surely you are fools indeed.

While Thia went on with her mummery she made signs to Marsilio that he had better run away. But Marsilio, who failed to catch her meaning, kept still in his hiding place. Cechato, half-stifled and weary of lying stretched on the floor, cried out, "Well, is it all over now?" But Thia answered, "Stay where you are, for heaven's sake. Did I not tell you I should have to repeat the incantation thrice? I hope you have not wrecked everything by trying to get up." "No, no, surely not," said Cechato, as Thia made him lie down as before, and began to chant her incantation again.

Marsilio now began to understand the meaning of Thia's mummery, so he slipped out from his hiding-place and got out of doors. Thia, when she saw him take to his heels and run out of the yard, finished her exorcism and suffered her fool of a husband to get up. Then Cechato, somewhat warmed, went out to unload the flour he had brought from the mill. Thia, going out to help him, saw Marsilio in the distance hurrying off, and shouted after him, "Ah, ah! what a wicked bird! Begone! I will send you a packing if you show yourself here again. Is he not a greedy wretch? Do you not see that he was bent on coming back? Heaven give him a bad year!" And so it happened every time the kite came back, that Thia would set to work with her conjuration as before.



TORQUATO TASSO.

Tasso, one of the four greatest poets of Italy, produced in his "Gerusalemme Liberata" (Jerusalem Delivered) the third and last of her great epics. He found his inspiration, not in the Carlovingian romances of Pulci, Boiardo and Ariosto, but in the First Crusade.

Torquato Tasso was born at Sorrento, near Naples, in 1544. His father had some note as a poet, and the son, trained in boyhood by the Jesuits, proved from his earliest years a prodigy of learning. As a man he set himself to reconcile Ariosto and Aristotle in a masterpiece which should be the great epic of Christendom. He made public his entire ideas and plans in three "Discorsi" (Discourses) on the epic art and the ancient unities. Tasso therefore sought for a theme which should not be either too old to have lost interest or too modern to prevent poetic license and invention in treatment. He chose the subject of the First Crusade and the liberation of the sepulchre of Christ from the Saracens in the eleventh century by Godfrey of Bouillon. In Godfrey he secured a noble hero, and, indeed, a hero who actually claimed descent, on the maternal side, from the great central figure of the previous romance cycle, Charlemagne. The quaint old English historian, William of Malmesbury, has left on record how Godfrey, stricken with a serious illness, made the solemn vow to undertake, if he should recover, the liberation of the Holy Sepulchre, and how he "shook disease from his limbs and shone with renovated beauty." His diplomacy with the Greek Emperor Alexius and his shaming of his brother Baldwin are well-known anecdotes of history. In 1099 he began the siege of Jerusalem, which was taken after five weeks' assault. Godfrey tarnished his glory as crusader by ordering a general massacre of infidels, but he somewhat redeemed this act by declining to wear a crown of gold in the city where the Saviour had worn a crown of thorns. Instead of king he proclaimed himself under the title of Baron and Defender of the Holy Sepulchre. He died in the year 1100 and was buried in the soil of his barony. Tasso makes him in the poem the equal of Tancred in the field and of Raymond in council.

Tasso does not follow faithfully all of the historical facts, and brings in the supernatural agency of God and Satan to supply the necessary epic machinery. There are twenty cantos. It opens with the summons of Godfrey by the Archangel Gabriel, who bids him march on Jerusalem. King Aladine is struck with consternation, but is reinforced by the arrival of the heroic maid, Clorinda, in knightly armor, from Persia. She makes a sally against the Franks, and Tancred is sent to the rescue. Thereupon Herminia, a daughter of the deceased king of Antioch, points out the leading Crusaders to Aladine, as Helen did the Argive heroes to Priam in the Iliad. Tancred and Clorinda come into personal conflict. Tancred falls in love with this fair Amazon, but afterward unwittingly slays the infidel heroine in a night combat. Satan (or Pluto, as Tasso calls him), indignant at the success of the Christians in Palestine, summons a council in the infernal regions, as the result of which an enchantress, Armida, is instigated to go to the camp of the Crusaders in order to seduce their chiefs. Rinaldo is cast into temporary disgrace through her wiles, but Godfrey remains unharmed. Herminia falls meanwhile in love with Tancred, and, alarmed over Tancred's wounds, puts on Clorinda's armor and seeks the Christian camp. Her horse runs away with her to a shepherd's cottage on the banks of the Jordan. Tancred loses himself in his pursuit of her and is conducted to Armida's castle, built on an island in the Dead Sea, where he is entrapped and confined in a cell. Raymond fights the Mohammedans in Tancred's absence. Rinaldo becomes Armida's slave in her bower of bliss. Mutiny breaks out at camp against Godfrey, who is supposed to have slain Rinaldo, owing to a false report of that knight's death. The latter is really under Armida's thraldom, and a mighty effort is necessary to rescue him. Godfrey is transported in a vision to Heaven, where Hugh, the deceased commander of the forces of the French king, assures him of ultimate victory over the scheming Sultan Solyman and the boastful Argantes. Only, as a first condition, Rinaldo must be brought back to camp. (He had already, before falling victim to her charms himself, liberated many Christian knights whom Armida had transformed to fishes.) Peter the Hermit is inspired to predict Rinaldo's future glory. Charles the Dane and Ubald are sent on the quest for Rinaldo. They journey even unto the island of Teneriffe, where they pass beasts, snow and the Fountain of Laughter, and rescue the entranced knight despite Armida's enchantments. She flies to an Egyptian caliph and pledges him her hand if he will but slay Rinaldo. The caliph despatches a carrier-dove to the besieged Mohammedans with a promise of reinforcement, but the dove, chased by a hawk, carries the news to Godfrey. An immediate attack is made on Jerusalem, in which Rinaldo, purified at Mount Olivet, performs wonders. Tancred has already slain Clorinda—to his own distress; he now slays Agricante. Jerusalem capitulates. Armida seeks to kill herself, but is sought out by Rinaldo and converted to Christianity. He then becomes her true knight. Such is the bare outline of this mixed epic of Christian heroism and romance.

Tasso brought to its execution a genius well fitted by temperament for the task. His religious idealism and his innate melancholy both suited his theme. As Carducci has well said: "Tasso is the legitimate heir of Dante Alighieri; he believes, and reasons on his faith by philosophy; he loves, and comments on his love in a learned style; he is an artist, and writes dialogues of scholastic speculation that would fain be Platonic."

Tasso had also written, at the age of eighteen, an epic on "Rinaldo." And he wrote later in life a poetic pastoral, "Aminta," which—produced in the days of Palestrina—is said to have exerted a marked influence on the new opera and cantata, and upon the contemporary romances of Italy. Tasso also wrote a drama, "Torrismondo," in which he sought to apply the principles of "Œdipus" to a tragedy of Belisarius and the Goths.

A precocious prodigy from the start, Tasso wore out his strength in his arduous literary labors, but more particularly in the intense anxiety which he felt for their fame. Before publishing his great epic he foolishly submitted it to a number of persons, all of whom suggested senseless changes; and after its publication his sensitive nature was tortured by the scandalous and contemptible attacks made upon it, himself and even the memory of his father by the Academy Della Crusca and the spiteful Salviati. Posterity has reason to think, furthermore, that throughout long years he had loved in secret the lovely Princess Leonora d'Este, but veiled his passion by addressing his verses to a second Leonora, wife of Giulio di Tiena. Some consider that he was alternately in love with the two, and even with Lucretia Bendidio, a maid of honor to the princess. Goethe, in his drama of "Torquato Tasso," adopts the tradition of his love for the princess as the reason for Tasso's imprisonment in the mad-house of Santa Anna by Leonora's brother, Alphonso II., Duke of Ferrara. Unsentimental criticism would seem to show that however Tasso may have been moved by love, his incarceration by the duke was due to a curious veritable nervousness, akin to insanity, which finally gained control of the exhausted poet. Tasso himself, in his own letters, bewails his unhappy mental condition and constantly speaks of the duke with the deepest reverence and even affection. The story of his later years has well been styled "a perfect Odyssey of malady, indigence and misfortune." Yet finally fate seemed to smile again.

To Cardinal Cinthio Aldobrandini, one of the nephews of Clement VIII., the reigning pope, Tasso had dedicated his revised epic under the new title of "Gerusalemme Conquistata." Tasso had also celebrated Clement's accession to the pontificate in an ode. Both of these spiritual princes now invited him (in 1594) to come to Rome to be crowned as Petrarch had been before him. Tasso could not refuse the honor, although little elated at the idea. He even prophesied that he should not live to enjoy this flattering tribute. The cardinal's illness really caused a delay, and the exhausted Tasso died in 1595 (ere he could be crowned with laurel) in the refuge of the Monastery of St. Onofrio. Clement had granted him a plenary indulgence in remission of his sins, "I go crowned," said the dying poet, "not with laurel as a poet into the Capitol, but with glory as a saint to heaven."

Tasso's Invocation.

The invocation and dedication with which Tasso opens his "Jerusalem Delivered," may be said to contain a statement of the Eastern Question which remains true to-day. The extract is from J. H. Wiffen's translation.

I sing the pious arms and Chief, who freed
  The Sepulchre of Christ from thrall profane;
Much did he toil in thought, and much in deed;
  Much in the glorious enterprise sustain;
And Hell in vain opposed him; and in vain
  Afric and Asia to the rescue poured
Their mingled tribes; Heaven recompensed his pain
  And from all fruitless sallies of the sword,
True to the Red-Cross flag his wandering friends restored.

O thou, the Muse, that not with fading palms
  Circlest thy brows on Pindus, but among
The Angels warbling their celestial psalms,
  Hast for thy coronal a golden throng
Of everlasting stars! make thou my song
  Lucid and pure; breathe thou the flame divine
Into my bosom; and forgive the wrong,
  If with grave truth light fiction I combine,
And sometimes grace my page with other flowers than thine.

The world, thou know'st, on tiptoe ever flies
  Where warbling most Parnassus' fountain winds,
And that Truth, robed in Song's benign disguise,
  Has won the coyest, soothed the sternest minds:
So the fond mother her sick infant blinds,
  Sprinkling the edges of the cup she gives
With sweets; delighted with the balm it finds
  Round the smooth brim, the medicine it receives,
Drinks the delusive draught, and, thus deluded, lives.

And thou, Alphonso, who from fortune's shocks
  And from her agitated sea, didst save

And pilot into port from circling rocks
  My wandering bark, nigh swallowed by the wave!
Accept with gracious smile—'tis all I crave—
  These my vowed tablets, in thy temple hung,
For the fresh life which then thy goodness gave;
  Some day, perchance, may my prophetic tongue
Venture of thee to sing what now must rest unsung.

Well would it be (if in harmonious peace
  The Christian Powers should e'er again unite,
With steed and ship their ravished spoils to seize,
  And for his theft the savage Turk requite)
That they to thee should yield, in wisdom's right,
  The rule by land, or, if it have more charms,
Of the high seas; meanwhile, let it delight
  To hear our verse ring with divine alarms;
Rival of Godfrey, hear, and hearing, grasp thine arms!

TANCRED AND CLORINDA.

MEANWHILE Clorinda rushes to assail
  The Prince, and level lays her spear renowned:
Both lances strike, and on the barred ventayle
  In shivers fly, and she remains discrowned;
For, burst its silver rivets, to the ground
  Her helmet leaped (incomparable blow!),
And by the rudeness of the shock unbound,
  Her sex to all the field emblazoning so,
Loose to the charméd winds her golden tresses flow.

Then blazed her eyes, then flashed her angry glance,
  Sweet e'en in wrath; in laughter then what grace
Would not be theirs!—but why that thoughtful trance?
  And, Tancred, why that scrutinizing gaze?
Know'st not thine idol? lo, the same dear face,
  Whence sprang the flame that on thy heart has preyed,
The sculptured image in its shrine retrace,
  And in thy foe behold the noble maid,
Who to the sylvan spring for cool refreshment strayed.

He, who her painted shield and silver crest
  Marked not at first, stood spell-bound at the sight;
She, guarding as she could her head, still pressed
  Th' assault, and struck, but he forbore the fight,

And to the rest transferring his despite,
Plied fast his whirling sword; yet not the less
Ceased she to follow and upbraid his flight,
With taunt and menace heightening his distress;
And, "Turn, false knight!" she cried, loud shouting through the press.

Struck, he not once returns the stroke, nor seeks
So much to ward the meditated blow,
As in those eyes and on those charming cheeks
To gaze, whence Passion's fond emotions flow:
"Void," to himself he says, "too cruel foe,
Void fall the strokes which that beloved arm
Distributes in its wrath! no fatal throe
Is that thy scimitar creates; the harm
Is in thy angry looks, that wound me while they charm!"

Resolved at length not unconfessed to fall,
Though hopeless quite her pity to obtain,
That she might know she struck her willing thrall,
Defenseless, suppliant, crouching to her chain;
"O thou," said he, "that followest o'er the plain
Me as thine only foe, of all this wide
Presented people! yet thy wrath restrain;
The press let us forsake, so may aside
Thy force with mine be proved, my skill with thine be tried.

"Then shalt thou measure in the face of day
Thy strength with mine, nor own my valor less."
Pleased she assents, and boldly leads the way,
Unhelmed,—he follows in his mute distress.
Already stood th' impatient Warrioress
Prepared, already had she struck, when he
Exclaimed: "Hold! hold! ere we ourselves address
To the stern fight, 'tis fit we should agree
Upon the terms of strife; fix first what these shall be!"

Her arm she stayed; strong love and wild despair
A reckless courage to his mind impart;
"These be the terms," said he, "since you forswear
All peace with me, pluck out my panting heart,
Mine own no more! I willingly shall part
With life, if farther life thy pride offend;

Long have I pined with love's tormenting smart;
'Tis fit the fond and feverish strife should end;
Take then the worthless life which I will ne'er defend.

"Behold! my arms are offered,—I present
My breast without defense,—spare not to smite!
Or shall I speed the task? I am content
To strip my cuirass off, and thus invite
Thy cruel steel!"—in harsher self-despite,
The mournful youth would have proclaimed his woes;
But suddenly, in craft or panic fright,
The Pagans yield to their pursuing foes,
And his brave troops rush by, and numbers interpose.

Like driven deer before th' Italian band
They yield, they fly in swiftness unconfined;
One base pursuer saw Clorinda stand,
Her rich locks spread like sunbeams on the wind,
And raised his arm in passing, from behind,
To stab secure the undefended maid;
But Tancred, conscious of the blow designed,
Shrieked out, "Beware!" to warn th' unconscious maid,
And with his own good sword bore off the hostile blade.

Still the stroke fell, and near the graceful head
Her snowy neck received the point, which drew
Some rosy drops, that crimsoned, as they shed,
Her yellow curls with their bespangling dew;
E'en thus gold beams with the blush-rose's hue,
When round it rubies sparkle from the hand
Of some rare artist; trembling at the view,
His wrath the prince no longer may command,
But on the caitiff falls, and shakes his threatening brand.

The villain flies, and full of rage the knight
Pursues,—as arrows swift, they scour the plains:
Perplexed she stands, and keeps them both in sight
To a great distance, nor to follow deigns,
But quickly her retreating band regains;—
Sometimes she fronts in hostile attitude
Th' arrested Franks, now flies, and now disdains
To fly,—fights, flies again, as suits her mood,
Nor can she well be termed pursuer or pursued.

ARMIDA VISITS GODFREY.

PRINCE IDRAOTES, a wizard of Damascus, seeking to weaken the Christians, sends his niece Armida to beguile Godfrey of Bouillon, the leader of the Crusaders.

Armida, in her youth and beauty's pride,
Assumed the adventure, and at close of day,
Eve's vesper star her solitary guide,
Alone, untended, took her secret way.
In clustering locks and feminine array,
Armed but with loveliness and frolic youth,
She trusts to conquer mighty kings, and slay
Embattled hosts; meanwhile false rumors soothe
The light censorious crowd, sagacious of the truth.

Few days elapsed, ere to her wishful view
The white pavilions of the Latins rise;
The camp she reached—her wondrous beauty drew
The gaze and admiration of all eyes;
Not less than if some strange star in the skies,
Or blazing comet's more resplendent tire
Appeared; a murmur far before her flies,
And crowds press round, to listen or inquire
Who the fair pilgrim is, and soothe their eyes' desire.

Never did Greece or Italy behold
A form to fancy and to taste so dear!
At times, the white veil dims her locks of gold,
At times, in bright relief they reappear:
So, when the stormy skies begin to clear,
Now through transparent clouds the sunshine gleams;
Now, issuing from its shrine, the gorgeous Sphere
Lights up the leaves, flowers, mountains, vales and streams,
With a diviner day—the spirit of bright beams.

New ringlets form the flowing winds amid
The native curls of her resplendent hair;
Her eye is fixed in self-reserve, and hid
Are all Love's treasures with a miser's care;

The rival roses upon cheeks more fair
Than morning light, their mingling tints dispose;
But on her lips, from which the amorous air
Of paradise exhales, the crimson rose
Its sole and simple bloom in modest beauty throws.

Crude as the grape unmellowed yet to wine,
Her bosom swells to sight; its virgin breasts,
Smooth, soft and sweet, like alabaster shine,
Part bare, part hid by her invidious vests;
Their jealous fringe the greedy eye arrests,
But leaves its fond imaginations free,
To sport, like doves, in those delicious nests,
And their most shadowed secrecies to see;
Peopling with blissful dreams the lively fantasy.

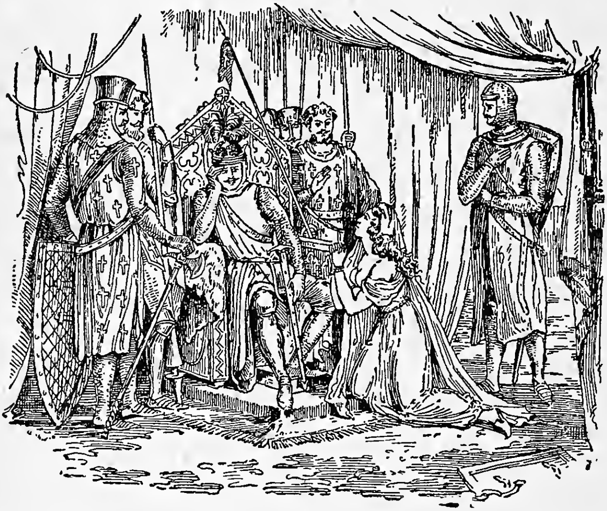
As through pure water or translucent glass
The sunbeam darts, yet leaves the crystal sound,
So through her folded robes unruffling pass
The thoughts, to wander on forbidden ground:
There daring Fancy takes her fairy round,
Such wondrous beauties singly to admire;
Which, in a pleasing fit of transport bound,
She after paints and whispers to Desire,
And with her charming tale foments the excited fire.

Praised and admired Armida passed amid
The wishful multitudes, nor seemed to spy,
Though well she saw, the interest raised, but hid
In her deep heart the smile that to her eye
Darted in prescience of the conquests nigh.
While in the mute suspense of troubled pride
She sought with look solicitous, yet shy,
For her uncertain feet an ushering guide
To the famed Captain's tent, young Eustace pressed her side.

As the winged insect to the lamp, so he
Flew to the splendor of her angel face,
Too much indulgent of his wish to see
Those eyes which shame and modesty abase;
And, drawn within the fascinating blaze,
Gathering, like kindled flax, pernicious fire

From its resplendence, stupid for a space
He stood—till the bold blood of blithe desire
Did to his faltering tongue these few wild words inspire:

"O Lady! if thy rank the name allow,
If shapes celestial answer to the call,—
For never thus did partial Heaven endow
With its own light a daughter of the Fall,—
Say on what errand, from what happy hall,
Seek'st thou our camp! and if indeed we greet
In thee one of the tribes angelical,
Cause us to to know—that we, as were most meet,
May bend to thee unblamed and kiss thy saintly feet."



"Nay," she replied, "thy praises shame a worth
Too poor to warrant such a bold belief;
Thou seest before thee one of mortal birth,
Dead to all joy, and but alive to grief;
My harsh misfortunes urge me to your Chief;
A foreign virgin in a timeless flight;
To him I speed for safety and relief,
Trusting that he will reassert my right;
So far resounds his fame, for mercy and for might.

"But, if indulgent courtesy be thine,
To pious Godfrey give me straight access!"

"Yes, lovely pilgrim," he replied, "be mine
The task to guide thee in thy young distress:
Nor is my interest with our Chieftain less
Than what a brother may presume to vaunt;
Thy suit shall not be wanting in success;
Whate'er his sceptre or my sword can grant,
Shall in thy power be placed, to punish or supplant."

He ceased, and brought her where, from the rude crowd
Apart, with captains and heroic peers,
Duke Godfrey sat; she reverently bowed,
A sweet shame mantling o'er her cheek, and tears
Stifling her speech: he reassured her fears,
Chid back the blush so beautifully bright,
Till, sweeter than the music of the spheres,
Their captive senses chaining in delight,
Her siren voice broke forth, and all were mute as Night.

Rinaldo's Interview with Armida.

Rinaldo paused to contemplate where next
He should his falchion ply, where render aid,—
His foes in all their movements were perplexed,
Their colors struck, and scarce a spear displayed.
Here then his terrible career he stayed,
Curbed in his courser, to the sheath resigned
His sword, his martial ecstasy allayed,
And, calming every passion, called to mind
Armida's helpless plight and destinies unkind.

Her flight he well observed; mild pity now
Called for his courtesy and gracious cheer,
And the remembrance of his parting vow
To stand her firm and faithful chevalier,
Came o'er his mind, with feelings sweet and dear;
So that he followed where the dinted ground
Betrayed her goaded palfrey's swift career:
She the meanwhile a dreary glen had found,
Fit place for secret deaths, with cypress compassed round.

Well pleased she was at heart that chance should guide
Her wand'ring steps to so retired a place;

Here she alighted then, and cast aside
Her bow, her arrows, and their golden case.
"There lie," she murmured, "in your deep disgrace,
Unhappy arms! that from the war return
With scarce a spot your mistress to *aggrace:* [*add grace to*
There buried lie, there rust amidst the fern,
Since to avenge my wrongs you've shown such small concern!

"Ah! midst so many weapons could not one
At least return with hostile crimson blessed?
If other hearts to you seem marble, shun,
Spare not your points to pierce a woman's breast;
In this mine own, stripped naked for the test,
Achieve your triumphs, and your fame restore;
Tender it is, Heaven knows, to wounds impressed,
By Love's sharp arrows, Love—who evermore
Strikes wheresoe'er he aims, and hurts the sufferer sore.

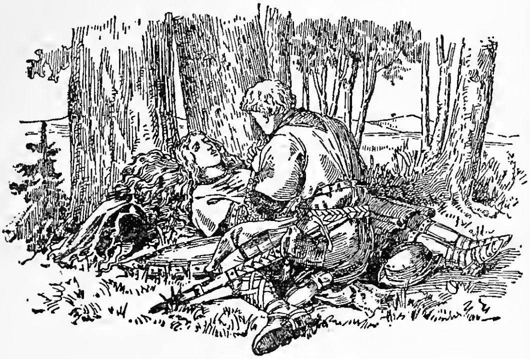
"Show yourselves sharp on me and strong; (your past
Degeneracy I pardon;) O poor heart!
Into what straits of fortune art thou cast,
When these alone can peace to thee impart.
But since no other solace to my smart
Remains, none other passport to repose,
Go to! the wounds of this consenting dart
Shall cure the wounds of love—a few brief throes,
And death shall bring the balm that soothes all earthly woes!

"Blessed, if in dying I bear not with me
This my long plague to pester Hell's foul host,
Hence, Love! come only, dear Disdain, and be
The eternal partner of my injured ghost!
Or, rising with it from the Stygian coast,
To the false wretch that did me such despite,
In such a whirlwind of resentment post,
With such grim shapes, that all his dreams by night
May be one ceaseless round of agonized affright!"

She ceased; and fixed in her intention, drew
The best and sharpest arrow from her case;
Rinaldo reached the wood, and caught a view
Of her mad gesture and disordered pace;

Saw her last act, and with how wild a grace
She to the fatal stroke her soul addressed;
Already death's pale hue o'erspread her face,
When, just in time her purpose to arrest,
The knight stepped in behind, and saved her beauteous breast.

Armida turned; and saw, to her surprise,
The knight, for unperceived was his advance;
Shrieking, she snatched away her angry eyes
From his loved face, and sunk in Passion's trance;
She swooned, she sank, like a sweet flower by chance
Snapped half in two, that, with its bells abased,
Droops on its stem; he with distracted glance
Upheld her, falling, round her charming waist
Threw his sustaining arm, her clasping zone unbraced;



And o'er her snowy breast and face deprived
Of life's warm hues, fond tears of pity shed;
As by the summer morning's dew revived,
The fading rose resumes its native red,
So she, recovering, raised her drooping head
And cheek, revived by this celestial rain;
Thrice her unclosing eyes sought his, thrice fled
The bitter-sweet enchantment, nor again
Would she look up, but blushed 'twixt wrath and warm disdain.

And with her languid hand would have repelled
The nervous arm by which she was sustained;
Oft she essayed, but he the faster held,
The more she strove the more she was inchained;

Yielding herself at length like one constrained
To that dear bond, for still perchance 'twas dear,
Despite the scorn she showed, the hate she feigned,
She sighing thus broke forth, while tear on tear
Gushed from the downcast eyes she did not, would not rear.

"Oh! ever parting and returning ever,
Cruel alike! what dark devices guide
Thy movements now? 'tis strange thou shouldst endeavor
To save the life whose strings thou dost divide.
Thou seek to save me! to what scorn beside
Am I reserved? what modes of misery
Am I to suffer next? No! no! thy pride
And traitorous purpose well we know; but I
Am weak indeed, if e'er I want the power to die.

"Thy honors truly must be incomplete,
If unsaluted; there must be displayed,
Chained to thy car, or suppliant at thy feet,
A dame, now seized by force, as first betrayed!
This be thy noblest boast: time was, I prayed
To thee for peace and life, how sweet would fate
Prove to my grief,—but ne'er, false renegade,
Kneel I to thee for it! there's not a state
Which, if it were thy gift, I should not hold in hate!

"Of myself, traitor! hope I to unloose,
Some way or other, this most wretched frame
From thy fierce tyranny; and if the noose,
Dagger, and drug, and precipice, and flame
Fail thy chained slave, by means as sure my aim,
Thank Heaven, I yet can compass, and defeat
No less thy malice than thy guile; for shame!
Cease thy base flatteries; cease thy false deceit:
How yet he strives with hope my sorrowing soul to cheat."

Thus she laments; and with the floods of tears
Which love and scorn distill from her fair eyes,
A sympathizing part her sorrow bears,
Where some chaste sparks of love and pity rise:
And with a voice sweet as the west wind's sighs,
He to her troubled heart speaks peace: "I crave

Thy grace, Armida! calm thyself," he cries;
"Not to be scorned, but crowned, thy life I save;
No foe, but still, yes still, thy champion, yea, thy slave.

"Mark in my eyes, if you my words alone
Distrust, the fervor of my soul: I swear
Again to seat thee on thy father's throne,
And make thy comfort my peculiar care;
And Oh, would Heaven, auspicious to my prayer,
Chase from thy mind, with its celestial flame,
Those mists of Pagan darkness which impair
Its inward grace and beauty, not a dame
In the whole East should match thy glory, power and fame!"

Thus does he soothe, thus sue to her; and so
Tempers his suit with tears, his tears with sighs,
That, like a virgin wreath of mountain snow
When zephyr breathes or sunshine warms the skies,
Her haughty scorn, that wore so stern a guise,
And all her cherished anger melt away,
And milder wishes in their room arise:
"Behold," she says, "thy hand-maid; I obey;
Thy lips my future life, thy will my fortune sway!"

THE GOLDEN AGE.

(From the idyllic drama "Aminta.")

O LOVELY age of gold!
Not that the rivers rolled
With milk, or that the woods wept honey-dew;
Not that the ready ground
Produced without a wound,
Or the mild serpent had no tooth that slew;
Not that a cloudless blue
Forever was in sight,
Or that the heaven, which burns
And now is cold by turns,
Looked out in glad and everlasting light;
No, nor that even the insolent ships from far
Brought war to no new lands, nor riches worse than war:

But solely that that vain
And breath-invented pain,
That idol of mistake, that worshiped cheat,

That Honor,—since so called
By vulgar minds appalled,—
Played not the tyrant with our nature yet.
It had not come to fret
The sweet and happy fold
Of gentle human-kind;
Nor did its hard law bind
Souls nursed in freedom; but that law of gold,
That glad and golden law, all free, all fitted,
Which Nature's own hand wrote,—What pleases is
permitted.

Then among streams and flowers
The little winged powers
Went singing carols without torch or bow;
The nymphs and shepherds sat
Mingling with innocent chat
Sports and low whispers; and with whispers low,
Kisses that would not go.
The maiden, budding o'er,
Kept not her bloom uneyed,
Which now a veil must hide,
Nor the crisp apples which her bosom bore;
And oftentimes, in river or in lake,
The lover and his love their merry bath would take.

'Twas thou, thou, Honor, first
That didst deny our thirst
Its drink, and on the fount thy covering set;
Thou bad'st kind eyes withdraw
Into constrained awe,
And keep the secret for their tears to wet;
Thou gather'dst in a net
The tresses from the air,
And madest the sports and plays
Turn all to sullen ways,
And puttest on speech a rein, in steps a care.
Thy work it is,—thou shade, that wilt not move,—
That what was once the gift is now the theft of Love.

Our sorrows and our pains,
These are thy noble gains.
But, O thou Love's and Nature's masterer,

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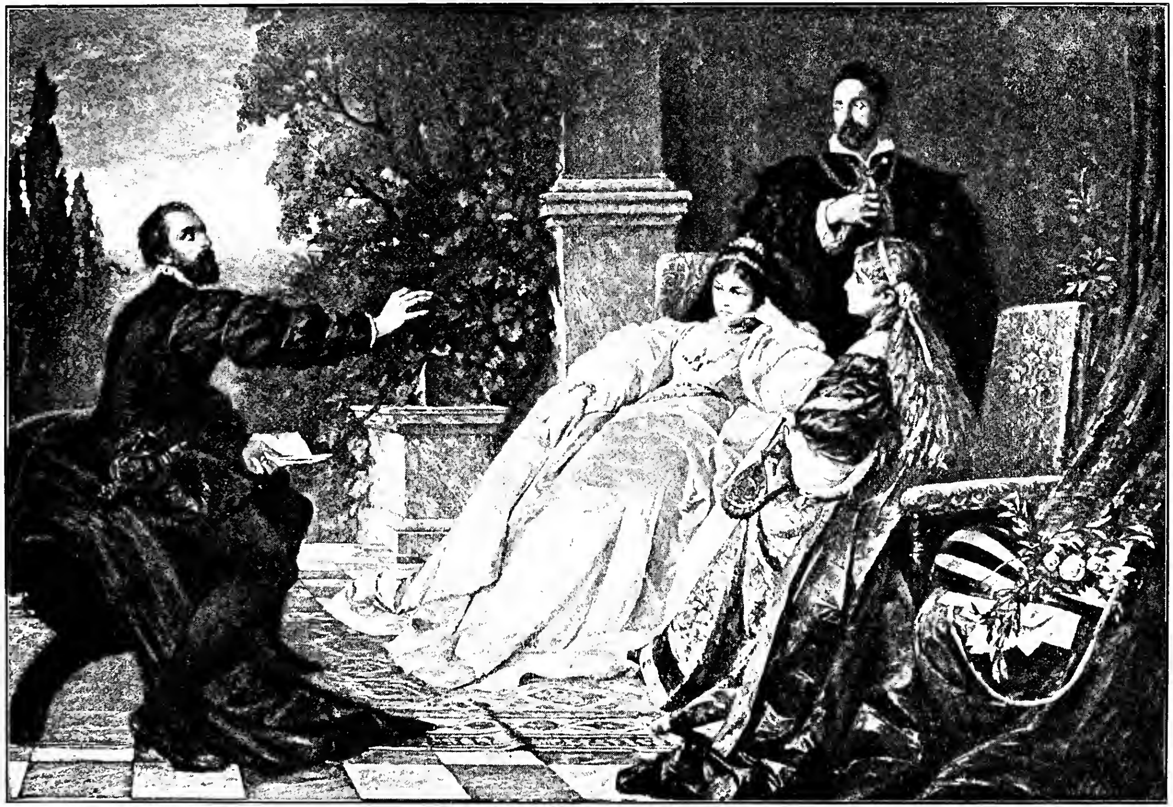

F. BARTH, PINX

TASSO AND THE TWO LEONORAS

Thou conqueror of the crowned,
What dost thou on this ground,
Too small a circle for thy mighty sphere?
Go and make slumber dear
To the renowned and high;
We here, a lowly race,
Can live without thy grace,
After the use of mild antiquity.
Go, let us love; since years
No truce allow, and life soon disappears;
Go, let us love; the daylight dies, is born;
But unto us the light
Dies once for all; and sleep brings on eternal night.

TASSO'S COMPLAINT OF HIS IMPRISONMENT.

(To Leonora, the Princess of Ferrara.)

FAIR daughters of René! my song
Is not of pride and ire,
Fraternal discord, hate, and wrong,
Burning in life and death so strong,
From rule's accursed desire,
That even the flames divided long
Upon their funeral pyre: *
But you I sing, of royal birth,
Nursed on one breast like them;
Two flowers, both lovely, blooming forth
From the same parent stem—
Cherished by heaven, beloved by earth—
Of each a treasured gem!

To you I speak, in whom we see
With wondrous concord blend
Sense, worth, fame, beauty, modesty—
Imploring you to lend
Compassion to the misery
And sufferings of your friend.
The memory of years gone by,
Oh, let me in your hearts renew—
The scenes, the thoughts o'er which I sigh,
The happy days I spent with you!

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* Eteocles and Polynices fell by each other's hands, and the flames of their bodies are said to have separated on the funeral pile.

And what, I ask, and where am I—
And what I was, and why secluded—
Whom did I trust, and who deluded?

Daughters of heroes and of kings,
  Allow me to recall
These and a thousand other things—
  Sad, sweet, and mournful all!
From me few words, more tears, grief wrings—
  Tears burning as they fall.
For royal halls and festive bowers,
  Where, nobly serving, I
Shared and beguiled your private hours,
  Studies and sports, I sigh;
For lyre, and trump, and wreathéd flowers;
Nay more, for freedom, health, applause,
  And even humanity's lost laws!

Why am I chased from human kind?
  What Circe in the lair
Of brutes thus keeps me spell-confined?
  Nests have the birds of air,
The very beasts in caverns find
  Shelter and rest, and share
At least kind Nature's gifts and laws;
For each his food and water draws
  From wood and fountain, where,
Wholesome, and pure, and safe, it was
  Furnished by Heaven's own care;
And all is bright and blest, because
  Freedom and health are there!

I merit punishment, I own;
  I erred, I must confess it; yet
The fault was in the tongue alone—
  The heart is true. Forgive! forget!
I beg for mercy, and my woes
  May claim with pity to be heard;
If to my prayers your ears you close,
Where can I hope for one kind word,
  In my extremity of ill?
And if the pang of hope deferred
  Arise from discord in your will,

For me must be revived again
The fate of Metius, and the pain.

I pray you, then, renew for me
The charm that made you doubly fair;
In sweet and virtuous harmony
Urging resistlessly my prayer
With him, for whose loved sake, I swear,
I more lament my fault than pains,
Strange and unheard-of as they are.

THE DREADED VOYAGE.

I SEE the anchored bark with streamers gay,
The beckoning pilot, and unruffled tide,
The south and stormy north their fury hide,
And only zephyrs on the waters play:
But winds and waves and skies alike betray;
Others who to their flattery dared confide,
And late when stars were bright sailed forth in pride,
Now breathe no more, or wander in dismay.
I see the trophies which the billows heap,
Torn sails, and wreck, and graveless bones that throng
The whitening beach, and spirits hovering round:
Still, if for woman's sake this cruel deep
I must essay—not shoals and rocks among,
But 'mid the Sirens, may my bones be found.

THREE LADIES.

THREE high-born dames it was my lot to see,
Not all alike in beauty, yet so fair,
And so akin in act, and look, and air,
That Nature seemed to say, "Sisters are we!"
I praised them all—but one of all the three
So charmed me, that I loved her, and became
Her bard, and sung my passion, and her name,
Till to the stars they soared past rivalry.
Her only I adored—and if my gaze
Was turned elsewhere, it was but to admire
Of her high beauty some far-scattered rays,
And worship her in idols—fond desire,
False incense hid;—yet I repent my praise,
As rank idolatry 'gainst love's true fire.

FRENCH LITERATURE.

PERIOD IV. 1600–1700.

BEFORE the close of the sixteenth century the critical spirit characteristic of France had manifested itself in literature. Italian words and forms of expression had invaded the French vocabulary; conceits and plays on words had vitiated the style; nor was it redeemed, on the other hand, by the turgid grandiloquence which was imported from Spain. The grammarian Malherbe became the reformer of the language. He went so far as to condemn the vigorous poetry of the Pléiade, and secured its banishment from polite literature. The brilliant society of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, in which the pompous Balzac (1594–1654) and the ingenious Voiture (1598–1648), as well as Malherbe, were leaders, exercised a severe censorship on the language and works of authors. The great critic Boileau-Despréaux satirized freely, yet justly, the faults of his contemporaries, but he also reasoned out, with admirable lucidity, the laws of poetry, according to French notions. His critical work was assisted by the newly-founded French Academy, though that honored tribunal and the high-minded critic were far from agreeing in their particular judgments. By their efforts, however, the principles of correct writing became generally recognized in France, and eventually rules, more or less rigid, were almost slavishly observed by writers, great and small, even after the grand catastrophe of the Revolution had overthrown almost everything of the old régime.

In the early part of the seventeenth century a peculiar style of pastoral romance had remarkable vogue. A typical example is Honoré D'Urfé's "L'Astrée," which was regarded as to some extent a delineation of the court of Henry IV. King Euric, Galatée, Daphnide and Alcidon had living prototypes easily recognized. The affected language which was put in their mouths went far beyond the English euphuism in its departure from simplicity. Madeleine de Scudéry (1607–1701), who was known as "Sappho" in the vocabulary of the Précieux, wrote other court romances, the "Grand Cyrus," and "Clélie" which though interminably tedious have a nominal fame. Seigneur La Calprenéde (*d.* 1663) was less successful with his "Cassandre," "Cléopâtre," and "Pharamond."

To the same time belonged the renowned philosopher, René Descartes (1595–1650) whose works were written chiefly in Latin, but whose "Discours sur la Méthode" (1637) contributed to the improvement of French prose, and is a model of philosophical eloquence. Blaise Pascal (1623–1662) achieved fame by his "Provincial Letters," in which he attacked the Jesuits, and by the fragments of a greater work on Christianity, which was interrupted by his death, and published by his friends under the title "Pensées."

The easy-going, simple-minded poet, La Fontaine (1621–1695), devoted himself with modest pride to the reconstruction of the Æsopic fable, and achieved his task with such consummate grace, that he may be regarded as the French creator of that department of literature. Besides his Fables he published licentious "Contes" and his "Théâtre," which exhibit the same pleasing style, yet are seldom read.

But the great dramatists are the chief glory of the seventeenth century in France. The humanists of the Renaissance had sought to revive the ancient classical drama. Jodelle was truly the father of the French classical tragedy. He obtained from King Henry II. the use of the courtyard of the Hôtel de Reims, in which romantic spot his Græco-Gallic dramas were enacted before the crushed throng of gay courtiers and sober scholars who gazed on his tragedy from the mullioned framework of the palace windows. With the predominant Italian atmosphere of the de Medici reign in France the scene must have seemed for all the world like a true Renaissance revival of "the glories that were Greece." Ronsard himself sang the praises of Jodelle, who thus "*Françaisement chanta la grecque tragédie*" (sang in French fashion the Greek tragedy). But Jodelle's plays were Pindaric in style rather than Sophoclean. The iambic recitations are interspersed with occasional choruses properly divided into strophe, antistrophe and epode. In "Cleopatra Captive" (in which Jodelle himself took the role of Cleopatra) a good example of this Jodellian drama may be seen. Antony is already dead, and it is his ghost which appears to the mourning Cleopatra. The chorus thereupon laments the fickleness of fate. Octavian expresses a desire to carry off the Egyptian queen; whereupon the chorus bewails the evils of pride. Later it chants the vicissitudes of fortune. When Octavian is finally informed of the suicide of Cleopatra, the Alexandrian women cry:

> "O stern mishap! mishap, alas, too stern!
> Thousand times stern, and thousand times too stern!"

Such is the actionless, half-lyrical, and utterly artificial tragedy which passed down as a heritage through Robert Garnier (1545–1601) to Corneille. Alexandre Hardy (1560–1631) attempted to construct a national drama in imitation of the successful contemporary English and Spanish examples, but failed. Comedy had, however, sprung into existence, bands of strolling players visiting French towns. Pierre Corneille, who was to become the greatest of French classical tragic writers, began by writing comedies. After proving his ability in this line, he turned to Seneca, and produced a French version of the "Medea." But the Spanish theatre furnished him a better model in Guillen de Castro's play of "The Cid." Numerous and radical changes had to be made before this complicated play could be conformed to the principles which Corneille regarded as essential. But when, after prodigious labor, the "Cid" was produced, it was instantly successful, and became henceforth the standard of the French drama. As the play ended happily it was called at first a tragi-comedy.

The "Cid" was criticised by the Academy at the instigation of Richelieu, but its popularity was undiminished.

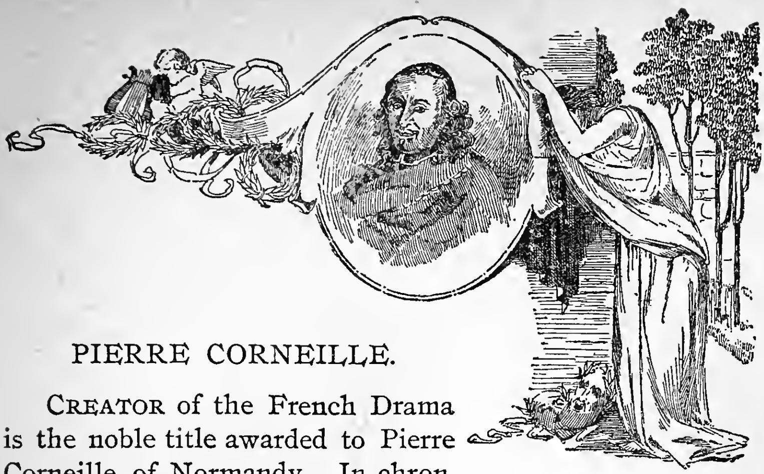
Corneille resorted to ancient history in his "Horace," treating of the famous fight of the Horatii and the Curiatii; and in "Cinna," dealing with a conspiracy against Augustus. After some other classical dramas, he drew from Spanish sources his fine comedy "Le Menteur" (The Liar) and his "Don Sancho." Other classical plays of varying merit followed, until in 1670 he and Racine were pitted against each other in writing a Roman play. The "Berenice" of the younger dramatist secured the approval of the public. Corneille, however, persisted in writing plays. His critical dissertations on the "Cid" and on the drama in general are of value to the student. His versification of Thomas á Kempis's "Imitation of Christ" won for him a new popularity.

Throughout the brilliant reign of Louis XIV. the theatre was the chief literary centre. Racine succeeded to the glory of Corneille. His tragedies were less declamatory and excelled in action, though he never rose to such lofty heights as his predecessor. The stage of these two great dramatists has been well described by the eminent English critic, A. W. Ward. That learned authority remarks: "In the progress of the dramatic genius of Corneille may be traced the movement of the French nation from a period of struggles to one of monarchical order and grandeur; and Racine reflects the serene calm, satisfied with the acceptance of fixed forms and pervaded by the spirit of religiosity, which characterizes settled periods of a national history. . . . Herein at least the age of Louis XIV. in France resembles the Periclean age of Athens: that in the drama it found not only its most brilliant, but its most faithful representative. The classicism of Corneille and Racine is but pseudo-classical, and the supremacy claimed for their works among the masterpieces of modern dramatic art has long since been overthrown by a sounder criticism. Most assuredly their art could not have been what it was, or have exercised the influence which it did exercise, had it not been in true sympathy with the life of the nation and the age which it adorned. . . . But though their sphere of ideas is thus not unreal, it is fatally limited to a range failing to comprehend the main currents of ideas in even a single nation. The French tragedy of this period is a product of a court, not of a people; and though the great master of contemporary French comedy, Molière, contrives to absorb in his art elements of a truly popular origin, as well as to assimilate foreign literary growths, he too lacks the full freedom of an art which associates its highest efforts with the impulses of national life."

Concerning the poetical canons of this drama, he adds: "The 'heroic' or rhymed verse which Corneille's example established as the permanent form of French tragic poetry had been first authoritatively commended as the appropriate form of tragedy by Italian criticism, though it was the example of French poets, as well as their practice, which introduced it to the notice of English dramatists." [The Italian suggestion was made by Cardinal Pallavicino Sforza, in his "Erminigildo."]

After some years of pronounced success, Racine suddenly resolved at the age of thirty-eight to retire from dramatic composition. For twenty years he steadfastly adhered to this determination, except when Madame de Maintenon solicited him to prepare Scriptural dramas for her school at St. Cyr. In compliance with her request he composed the dramas of "Esther" and "Athalie," which are in no way inferior to his earlier classical tragedies.

Comedy exhibits in this age the still greater genius of Molière, but the treatment of this writer and some others of his time is reserved for a later volume.



PIERRE CORNEILLE.

CREATOR of the French Drama is the noble title awarded to Pierre Corneille, of Normandy. In chronological justness, this title should be bestowed upon Étienne Jodelle (1532–1573), one of the famous Pléiade. Jodelle had imitated Seneca. Corneille's "Le Cid," which was to represent to Victor Hugo the extreme of classicism, did not seem truly classical enough to Corneille's own contemporaries. To them "Le Cid" was highly romantic in both theme and treatment. Jodelle's tragedies had better pleased the scholars who, in celebration of one of his dramas, had actually held an ancient fête champêtre and crowned a stag with ivy and flowers in honor of Thespis. But Jodelle's tragedy never flourished outside of college and court. It was Corneille who was to make, in spite of the censure of Cardinal Richelieu's new Academy, the supreme appeal to the people of Paris. It was not, however, until Corneille had written eight dramas of small value that he found his true province. Indeed, in one of his earliest tragedies, that of "Clitandre, or Innocence Delivered" (1632), Dorise, the heroine, had her "innocence delivered" by stabbing her would-be seducer with a hair-pin—after which followed, of course, the inevitable philosophic meditation.

But in 1636, when Corneille was thirty years old, he gave to the French stage its great masterpiece, "The Cid." The theme was romantic, instead of classic, being based on Spain's chivalric romances. The especial source of Corneille's drama was a work by Guillen de Castro on "The Youth of the Cid." In the drama of both writers the Cid is a gallant young Castilian hero of twenty, and the plot celebrates his love-episode with Chimène. Tragic in its opening involvement, its happy outcome renders this love affair highly romantic. Its Spanish code of honor, its almost demigod type of chivalry, and its interminably pompous declamations alone make it seem classical, instead of romantic in spirit, to Victor Hugo and the passionate young bards of the opening nineteenth century.

The character of the Cid, Don Rodrigue (in Spanish, Roderigo), is almost legendary, and typifies, above even its historical aspects, the patriotism and heroism of embattled Spain against the Moors. The old folk-ballads recounted how the youthful Cid avenged an insult to his father, Don Diego, by the duel to death with Don Gomez, Count of Gormas, father of Chimène (Ximenez or Ximena). Corneille's play begins, after a revelation of the mutual love of Don Rodrigue and Chimène, with the fatal affront given by Chimène's sire to Don Diego. The lover, after a severe mental struggle between love and honor, avenges his father. Chimène then agonizes in a like struggle, at the end of which she hastens to the king to demand Rodrigue's blood in vengeance—vowing to herself to die as soon as this atonement is achieved. Meanwhile a raid of infidels has been repulsed, and the invading host crushed by Rodrigue at the head of the nobles. The king feels compelled to confer on him the title of Le Cid (in Arabic, el Seid, "the Lord"), which he has won for himself among the Saracens. Rodrigue's description of the combat is a splendid piece of Corneille's rhetoric. Chimène, deserted by the king, now accepts Don Sancho as a champion. But previously Chimène has swooned on a false report of the Cid's death, and when, as a subtle ruse, Rodrigue sends his sword by Don Sancho, as if conquered, Chimène pours out her love-wrath on the unlucky knight. The lovers are thus reunited, after all, in a manner which struck Corneille's classical critics as decidedly unheroic. Chapelain, encouraged by the jealous Richelieu, complained that the dramatist could not "please the learned;" Corneille was said to rank below Scudéry, and to have degraded tragedy to melodrama. But to the Parisian public all such classical fastidiousness was caviare: to the people Chimène was more lovely because of her very humanity, her feminine inconsistency, and yet faithfulness to the great passion of love. As Boileau declared,

> In vain 'gainst the Cid a minister makes league;
> All Paris for Chimène has the eyes of Rodrigue.

And throughout France it became a proverb, "Cela est beau comme le Cid" (beautiful as "The Cid").

Corneille himself realized, in the condemnation of his master work by the Academy, that he had broken the Aristotelian unities and laws of the classical drama. In his three essays on the dramatic art—"On the Utility of Dramatic Poetry," "On Tragedy," and "On the Three Unities"—he shows that he did not himself perceive the vital essence of his own reform. In "Horatius," dedicated with a dry satire to his arch-enemy, Richelieu, and in "Cinna," which he wrote as an answer to his critics to show his power to invent an original drama, he returned more to the classic model. And he took pride, in fact, that "as the verses of 'Horatius' are more appropriate and less strained for the expression of thought than those of the 'Cid,' so those of 'Cinna' are more finished than the verses of 'Horatius.'" After two defeats, he was finally crowned an Immortal in the boastful Academy. In "Horatius," Corneille contrasts the characters of Sabine and Camille, and paints an old-time Roman in old Horatius. In "Cinna," he depicts a fruitless conspiracy against the forgiving Cæsar Augustus. In "Polyeucte" he composed "a Christian tragedy," as he himself styled it. His other dramas call for no mention here, save that it may be remarked that he wrote a comedy-ballet, Psyche, in conjunction with Molière, and a comedy, "Le Menteur" (The Liar), which has caused him to be styled the Father of French Comedy.

Pierre Corneille was born at Rouen in 1606, the son of a king's advocate at the court of Normandy. He was educated by the Jesuits and was destined for the bar. Strange to say, it was an impediment of speech that rescued him for the stage. Before his death (in 1684) he had been surpassed by Racine and beheld with sadness his own decline. Corneille, once the pride of Paris, died neglected and almost forgotten.

DON DIEGO AND HIS SON, THE CID.

DON DIEGO, formerly a valiant warrior of Castile, but now infirm through age, was appointed by King Ferdinand tutor of his son. Count de Gormas is jealous of this mark of favor, and meeting Don Diego quarrels with him and strikes him on the cheek with his glove. This insult is worse than death to the aged warrior, who appeals to his assailant to slay him, but the Count derides him. Diego's rage and shame find vent in the following outburst:

O rage, despair! O age, thou traitor-foe!
Have I not lived too long to bear a blow?
To see, grown grey in martial toils and fame,
So many laurels fade in one day's shame?
My arm, so long by Spain in honor held—
My arm, that hath so oft the realm upheld,
So oft the king upon his throne sustained,
Now to betray my quarrel, leave me stained!
O cruel memory of my glories gone,
So many days thus one by one undone!
New dignity by which my peace is ta'en,
Precipice whence my honor fallen is slain,
Must my foe triumph in your light, while I
Disgraced must live, or unavenged must die?
Count, take my office: near my prince must be
In this high rank no man disgraced like me.
Thy jealous rage by such affront hast brought
To me unfitness, the king's choice to nought.
And thou, the instrument of glorious deeds,
Thou sword which icy age no longer needs,
Once dreaded, but which in this last offence
Hast been a thing of show, not of defence—
Go, leave the last and lowest of mankind,
And to avenge me better master find.

Diego then calls upon his son Roderigo, the Cid, to avenge the affront, but Roderigo is in love with Chimène (Ximena), the daughter of Count de Gormas. The struggle in his soul between the demands of honor and the passion of love is shown in his soliloquy.

Struck to the depths of my sad heart
By blow so unforeseen, a mortal thrust;
Avenger of a quarrel stern and just,

Victim of an unjust and deadly dart,
Silent I stand.—My soul, in sad amaze,
Yields to the blow that slays.
So near, so near to recompense so tender.
O God, the wondrous pain!
My father's name insulted, and the offender
The father of Chimène.

What bitter strife within me burns!
Against my honor my affections move.
I must avenge my sire—and lose my love.
One stirs my soul, my arm the other turns.
O bound to such sad choice!—*her* heart to break,
Or bear shame for her sake.
On either side my woe is infinite.
O God, the bitter pain!
Accept the insult, and refrain to slay
The father of Chimène.

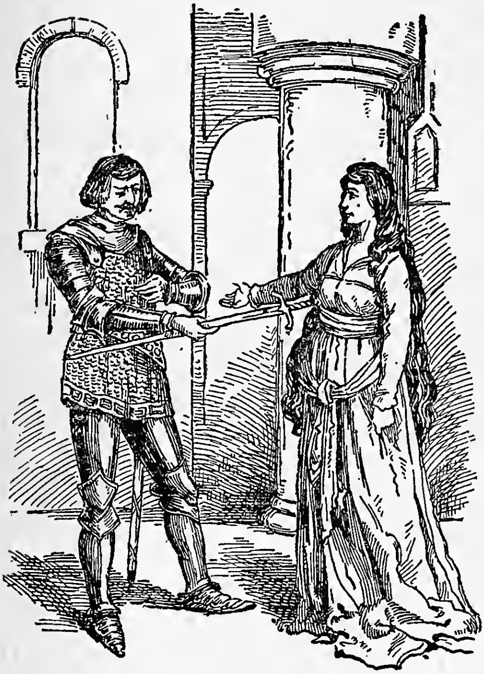
My father—my betrothed; honor or love.
O noble tyranny, O high constraint!
My pleasures all are dead, my glories faint.
Unworthy or unhappy I must prove.
What dear and cruel hope dost thou discover
To generous son and lover,
O noble enemy of all my joy,
Sword that bring'st nought but pain!
To 'venge my sire must I thy blade employ,
And lose by thee Chimène?

THE CID AND CHIMÈNE.

RODERIGO, the Cid, having vindicated his father's honor by slaying the Count de Gormas in a duel, makes his way to his betrothed Chimène, the Count's daughter, and offers her his sword that she may take vengeance for the death of her father. But she rejects the proposal with horror. Roderigo declares that he has justly incurred her wrath, and cannot live to hear her reproach him. Then Chimène replies:

Chimène. Ah, Roderigo, though thy foe I be,
I blame thee not to have fled this infamy;
And howsoe'er my misery outwards flows,
Without accusing thee I weep my woes.

I know for such a wrong what cruel art
Honor demands from every generous heart.
Thou hast done only what the brave must do,
But in the act I learn my part from you:
Thy fatal valor and sad victory show
What to my father and my house I owe.



Mine the same care: bound for my misery
T' avenge my sire, and win my fame in thee.
Alas! thy part in this is my despair.
Had I from other hand such woe to bear,
My soul had found in thee the sole relief,
The only solace for her bitter grief.
What help, what strength in sorrow's evil day
If thy dear hand had wiped my tears away!
But think not in my heart that love has room
With coward thoughts to save thee from thy doom,
Although affection fain would break thy bonds,
My courage, generous too, to thine responds.
Thou prov'st thee worthy me in wounding me;
And by thy death I'll prove me worthy thee.

Roderigo. Do not borrow another arm, O my Chimène! believe me, this is not a fit return. My arm alone avenged my offence; thy hand alone should take vengeance for thine.

Chim. Cruel! why torture me with this persistence? You avenged yourself without aid, but you would help me to my vengeance. No, I will follow your example; I have too much courage to share my glory with thee.

Rod. Can I not obtain this last favor? For the sake of your dead father, for the sake of our love, strike me, for vengeance or for pity!

Chim. Go! I hate you not.

Rod. But I deserve your hatred.

Chim. Go! I cannot give it.

Rod. Care you so little for blame and public reproach? When it is known that you love me still, what will envy and malice say? Silence them, and slay me for your good fame.

Chim. My good fame shall shine the brighter that I let thee live. The blackest envy will applaud me and lament my sorrows when they see that I adore thee, yet pursue thee.

Rod. Let me die!

Chim. Go! go!

Rod. What purpose is in thy mind?

Chim. To avenge my father in spite of our love. But notwithstanding the rigor of this cruel duty, my only hope is to fail in it.

Rod. O miracle of love!

Chim. O crown of misery!

Rod. What grief and tears will our fathers cost us!

Chim. Roderigo, who could have believed it?

Rod. Chimène, who would have uttered it?

Chim. That our joy so nigh was so soon lost!

Rod. That close to port, unlikely as it seemed,
A sudden storm should shipwreck all our hopes!

Chim. Ah! fatal griefs!

Rod. Ah! profitless regrets!

ÆMILIA.

CORNEILLE considered his "Cinna" as the finest of his classical dramas. It relates to the plots in the household of the Emperor Augustus. He had, beyond his usual generosity to former enemies, been liberal to Cinna, the grandson of Pompey, and to Æmilia, the daughter of Toranius. Yet Æmilia cannot forgive him for causing the death of her father Toranius, who had been proscribed during the Triumvirate. She persuades her lover Cinna to engage in a conspiracy against the Emperor. The following soliloquy in the opening of the play expresses her feeling, and gives the keynote to the drama.

Ye impatient longings for a signal revenge,
Whose origin is due to my father's death,
Headstrong children of my resentment,
Whom my misguided grief blindly embraces,
Ye assume too potent sway over my soul.

Suffer me to breathe yet for a few moments,
And to consider, in this state where I am,
Both what I venture and what I pursue.
When I behold Augustus in the midst of his glory,
And when you reproach my sad memory
That my father, slain by his own hand,
Was the first step to the throne where I see him—
When you offer me this picture of blood,
The cause of my hatred, the result of his fury,
I abandon myself to your burning transports,
I feel that for one death, I owe him a thousand.
And yet, amidst a rage so founded on reason,
Still more love I Cinna than I hate Augustus,
And I feel this seething passion grow cool,
When to effect it, I must expose my lover.

THE TRAITOR LOVERS.

THE Emperor Augustus, having been informed of Cinna's conspiracy, sends for him and rehearses all its details. He shows that from it no good can result for Cinna or for Rome. The conspirator admits his guilt and professes his readiness to suffer the extreme penalty, but Augustus allows him to choose his own punishment. Then Livia, the emperor's wife, enters with Æmilia, his adopted daughter. The latter, to his astonishment, declares that she alone is responsible for Cinna's crime.

Livia. You know not yet all his accomplices.
Your Æmilia is one of them; behold her.
Cinna. O heavens! It is herself.
Augustus. And you, my daughter, too!
Æmilia. Yes; all that he did, he did to please me;
Of it, my lord, I was the cause and the reward.
Aug. What! Does the love which yesterday I caused to spring
Move you already to die for him to-day?
Your soul yields itself too much to that passion,
It is too soon to love the lover that I gave you.
Æmil. This love which subjects me to your resentment
Is not the prompt effect of your commands;
Without your order these flames arose in our hearts,
They are the secret of more than four years.
But though I loved him, and he burned for me,

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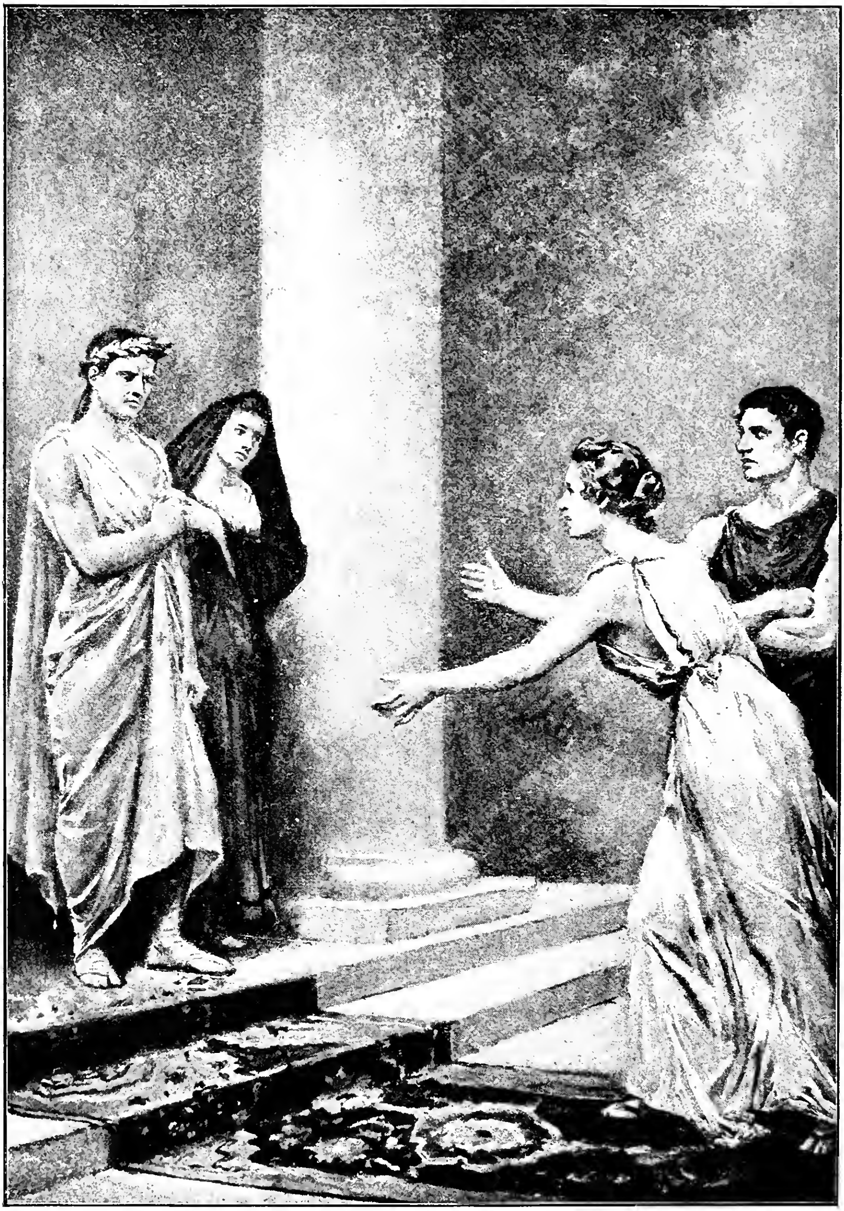


S. J. FERRIS, PINX

ÆMILIA BEFORE AUGUSTUS

A hatred still stronger made the law for both.
I would never give him the least hope of love
Till he had assured me of vengeance for my father.
I made him swear it; he sought out his friends;
Heaven destroys the success that I had promised myself,
And I come, my lord, to offer you a victim,
Not to save his life by charging myself with crime.
After his attempt his fault is too clear,
And in a crime of state every excuse is vain.
To die in his presence and regain my sire,
'Tis that brings me here, and that is my hope.
Aug. Until when, O Heaven! and for what reason
Will you direct against me attacks in my house?
Julia I have driven from it for her debauchery;
In her place my love had made choice of Æmilia,
And her likewise I see unworthy of that rank.
The one robbed me of honor, the other thirsts for my blood,
Both took their guilty passions as their guides;
The one became wanton, the other a parricide.
O my daughter! Is this the reward of my favors?
Æmil. My father's produced the like effect in you.
Aug. Think with what affection I nourished your youth.
Æmil. He nourished yours with the same tenderness;
He was your tutor, and you were his assassin;
You have already shown me the path to crime.
Mine differs from yours in this point alone,
That your ambition sacrificed my father,
And that a just wrath with which I still burn
Resolved to slay you for his innocent blood.

Livia then interrupts to declare that, by the law of Heaven, the emperor cannot be punished for crimes committed by him as a private person, that he is surrounded with an inviolable sanctity. Æmilia assents to this doctrine, and declares that she is not seeking to defend herself.

Æmil. Punish then, lord, these pampered criminals
Who of your favorites make conspicuous ingrates.
Cut off my sad days to assure your own.
If I seduced Cinna, I will seduce many another.
I am more to be feared, and you are more in danger,
If love and blood together call me to avenge them.
Cin. Have I been seduced by you? Can I endure still

To be dishonored by her whom I adore?
My lord, the truth must here be fully told.
Before I loved her I had formed that plot.
To my pure desires finding her immovable,
I thought that to other feelings she would yield.
I spoke of her father and of your severity,
And the offer of my arm followed that of my heart.
How sweet is vengeance to a woman's soul!
By that means I attacked, by that I won her soul.
For my small merit she might neglect me,
She could not neglect the arm that would avenge her.
She did not conspire save by my artifice;
I was the sole author, she but an accomplice.
Æmil. Cinna, what dare you say? Is it to cherish me
To rob me of honor when I must die?
Cin. Die, but in dying tarnish not my glory.
Æmil. Mine would wither, should Cæsar believe you.
Cin. And mine is lost, if you draw to yourself
All that follows from such powerful strokes.
Æmil. Well then, take your part of it, and leave me mine;
To weaken it would be to weaken thine.
Glory and pleasure, shame and torments,
All should be common between true lovers.
(*To Augustus.*) The souls of both, my lord, are Roman souls;
Uniting our loves, we united our hates,
The quick desire to avenge our lost relatives
Taught us our duties at the same moment.
In that noble plot our hearts were joined,
Our generous spirits formed it together;
Together we sought the honor of a fair crime.
You wished to unite us, separate us not.

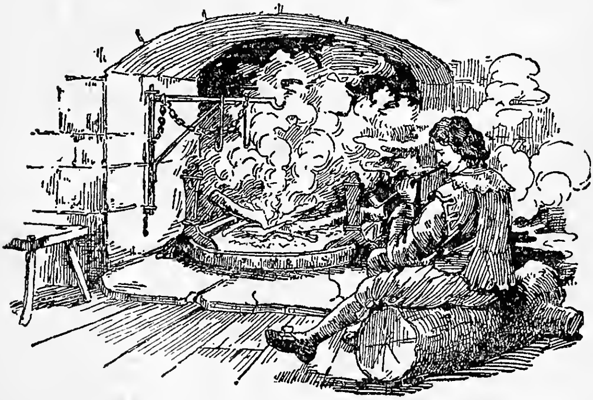
SIEUR DE SAINT AMANT.

Among the less important and rather disreputable poets of the beginning of the seventeenth century was Mark Antoine Gérard, Sieur de Saint Amant. He was born at Rouen in 1594, being the son of a sea-captain who had served in the English fleet and also sailed to India. The son went early to Paris, and in 1619 published a poem on "Solitude." He was employed in turn by the Duke de Retz, Admiral Count

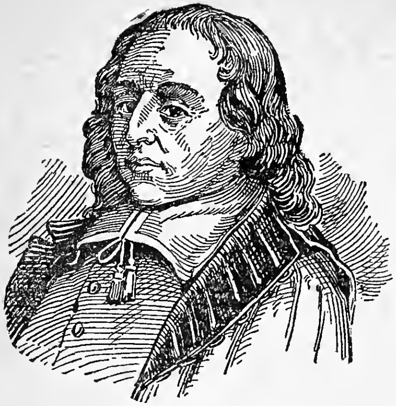
D'Harcourt, and Queen Marie of Poland. Though he was a jovial scapegrace, he was elected one of the earliest members of the French Academy, but was excused from the customary oration at introduction on promising to contribute to the Dictionary all the burlesque words, a promise which he never fulfilled. He wrote odes, idylls, satires, and in his old age an epic on "Moses Saved." He died in 1661. His best poems are of the light satiric or Anacreontic class. The following is one of the earliest sonnets on Tobacco.

The Tobacco-Smoker's Dreams.

Upon a fagot seated, pipe in lips,
  Leaning my head against the chimney wall,
  My heart sinks in me, down my eyelids fall,
As all alone I think on life's eclipse.
Hope, that puts off to-morrow for to-day,
  Essays to change my sadness for a while,
  And shows me, with her kind and youthful smile,
A fate more glorious than men's words can say.
Meantime the herb in ashes sinks and dies;
Then to its sadness back my spirit flies,
  And the old troubles still rise up behind.
Live upon hope and smoke your pipe; all's one.
It means the same when it is passed and done;
  One is but smoke, the other is but wind.



BLAISE PASCAL.



Blaise Pascal (1623–1662) was a mathematical genius, as well as a masterly moral logician. At the age of sixteen he wrote a Latin treatise on "Conic Sections," which astonished even Descartes. In his philosophical writings, indeed, the same trait was conspicuous. "The characteristic of Pascal is rigor," declared Victor Cousin, before the French Academy; "that inflexible rigor which aims, in everything, at the utmost precision, the last degree of evidence. Hence the clear and luminous style, the firm and decided manner, overlaid alternately by the charm of a most amiable mind, and by the sublime melancholy of a soul which very soon wearied of the world." It is this virtue which still makes Pascal's "Provincial Letters" (as his defence of the Jansenists against the Jesuits is called) highly interesting. Jansenism regarded human depravity as total and Divine grace as irresistible. After writing this defence Pascal meditated, in the solitude of Port-Royal des Champs (eighteen miles from Paris), a treatise on Christianity, as he apprehended it. But from his eighteenth year this zealous devotee had never passed a day without pain, and he died in his thirty-ninth year, leaving behind only a few fragments of this contemplated masterpiece. These fragments, published after his death, under the title of "Pensées" (Thoughts), prove that "the world lost much by the early death of one who combined in himself the strength of a Locke and a Paley, not to say of a Newton also."

The Triumph of Truth.

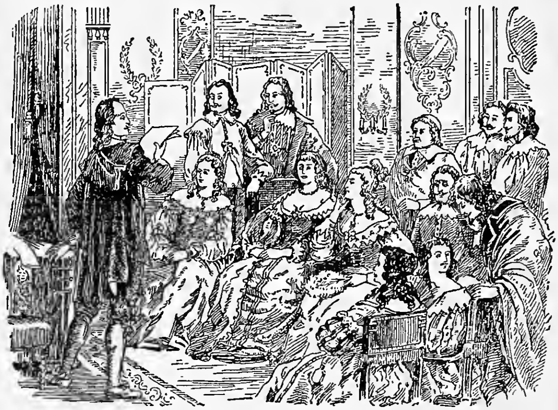
That war in which violence attempts to oppress truth is peculiar and of long duration; all the efforts of violence cannot weaken truth, and only serve to enhance it the more. All the light of truth cannot do anything to stop violence, and only irritate it more. When force combats force, the most powerful destroys the least powerful; when we oppose speeches against speeches, those which are true and convincing confound and dispel those which are nothing but vanity and falsehood; but violence and truth cannot act reciprocally upon one another. Nevertheless, let us not conclude from this that these things are equal; for there is this very great difference, that violence has only a limited range by command of God, who causes its effects to be conducive to the glory of the truth which it attacks; whilst truth exists to all eternity, and finally triumphs over its enemies, because it is eternal and powerful as God itself.

MAN AND THE UNIVERSE.

LET man regard the universe of nature in its full and lofty majesty; let him carry his sight far beyond the petty objects which surround him; let him behold that brilliant light set like an eternal lamp to enlighten the universe; let the world seem to him as a point in comparison with the vast orbit which the sun describes, and let him think with wonder that this vast orbit itself is but an insignificant point compared with that which is embraced by the stars revolving in the firmament. But if our sight is here arrested, let the imagination pass beyond; it will weary of its conceptions before nature wearies of her facts. The whole visible world is an imperceptible spot in the ample bosom of nature. No idea can approach it. In vain do we expand our conceptions beyond imaginable space; we produce but atoms in comparison with the reality of things. It is an infinite sphere, whose centre is everywhere, its circumference nowhere. This, in short, is the most intelligible evidence of the omnipotence of God, that our imagination should be lost in such a thought. Returning to himself, let man consider what he is in comparison with what is; let him regard himself as lost in this remote corner of nature, and in this petty prison wherein he is confined—I mean the universe—let him learn to value the earth, kingdoms, cities, himself, at their due worth.

THE HÔTEL DE RAMBOUILLET.

THE French literary salon had its origin in the gatherings of the Hôtel de Rambouillet. Its hostess was the beautiful, young, and noble-spirited Catherine de Vivonne, Marquise de Rambouillet (1588–1665). This enterprise deserves notice as the pioneer of the salons which now flourish in every civilized land. Catherine de Vivonne's court, where she swayed with a rule as powerful and more gracious than either Mary de Medici's or Anne of Austria's, has been described elaborately in the malicious "Historiettes" of Tallemant des Reaux, her contemporary; but even his biting pen stops short of drawing an ill-natured portrait of the Marquise. "She it was," he admits, "who corrected the evil manners then in vogue." The marquise had been married to Charles d'Angennes at the tender age of twelve. She was a daughter of the Roman house of Savelli, and her Italian sentiment recoiled from the gaiety of the court of Henry IV., and found refuge in the pastoral fancies of Racan's "Bergeries" and Honoré d'Urfé's "Astrée." She evidently determined "to create in the midst of the gay capital an oasis of romance



CORNEILLE READING IN THE HÔTEL DE RAMBOUILLET.

such as these poems and stories had taught her to covet." In 1608 she established her reunions at the Hôtel Pisani, or Hôtel de Rambouillet. She was the first to devise suites for reception-rooms for guests. For fifty years she held her peerless court, despite the mushroom growth, in later days, of a host of rival coteries. Malherbe was her chief guest. At his elbow came Racan. Then came Chapelain, sublime "lawgiver of Parnassus," with his future epic, "La Pucelle," dancing in his head; Voiture; and, indeed, the young bishop of Luçon, afterwards to be Cardinal de Richelieu. The Count de Guiche, later Duke de Grammont, was also fluttering like a butterfly around the salon. The Marquise suffered from a nervous disorder and therefore kept her bed while receiving her brilliant company, thus giving rise to the phrase, "courir les ruelles." * So precisely did she study her duties as hostess, that in winter she denied fire as perilous to the complexion of herself and of her delicate guests. She saw her company in a nightcap, hence a phrase had to be invented for that not very poetical headgear. Its association with dreams suggested the title of "the innocent accomplice of falsehood," and thus that crisis was safely passed. The annals of the Hôtel de Rambouillet are full of such mock elegance and farcical refinement as this, and yet all this farce gave Richelieu the grave inspiration of the French Academy.

Before this circle Corneille read his tragedies, and the youth Bossuet first displayed the genius of the future preacher. These weekly feasts soon became literary tournaments, wherein the wits tilted at each other in verbal feats and criticisms. No unclean nor vulgar words were permitted within the sacred pale. Polite and delicately conceited phrases became the fashion. The Marquise had even her own familiar name of Catherine transmuted into the romantic anagram of Arthénice. It is recorded that this feat cost Malherbe a whole afternoon of wit-torturing.

Two episodes of the salon are worthy of special remembrance. One is the sonnet war waged between the Uranistes and the Jobistes (partisans of two once-famous sonnets by

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* *Ruelle* is the space between the side of a bed and the wall. *Courir les ruelles* is "to run or move in these passages."

Voiture and Benserade). The other is the "Guirlande de Julie" (garland of Julia), a collection of poems on floral sentiments written by all the famous poets of Arthénice's court in honor of her eldest daughter and later successor, Julie d'Angennes. It was the weaknesses of this famous Hôtel that gave rise to the follies of the sister coteries ridiculed so mercilessly by Molière as "Les Précieuses." There was born in Paris and spread throughout Europe an elaborate and euphuistic jargon satirized by Tallemant, who said they all "spoke Phœbus." We can now perceive traces of the quaint and affected style of the Précieuses even in the piquant letters of Madame de Sévigné.

But the great literary champions of the newly-risen "Précieuses" were the Scudérys, brother and sister. Georges de Scudéry (1601–1667) was a sort of swaggering swashbuckler with a vein of gasconade in his nature. He had been a brave soldier, however, and was made governor of the fortress at Marseilles. He became the most characteristic figure of the Paris of his day. His literary style was amusingly bombastic; he wrote for the French Academy the letter attacking Corneille's "Cid." His younger sister, Madeleine de Scudéry (1607–1701), possessed the true literary genius of the family. She began by writing under her brother's name as a pseudonym, but she soon published romance after romance under her own name. Decidedly homely, she was nevertheless credited with being a mistress of the grand art of conversation, and she rose to be honored as the first bluestocking of Paris and of the world. She adopted the sobriquet of "Sappho," and founded a salon of her own as the "Société du Samedi" (Saturday Society). Her novels include "Artamène, or Cyrus the Great," "Clélie," "Ibrahim or the Illustrious Bassa" and "Almahide," so enjoyed by Mme. de Sévigné. Her heroes, artificial creations after Oriental and classical models, have been since terribly satirized, and modern criticism pronounces her romances to be tiresomely prolix. But under her silly heroes and tedious plots Mlle. de Scudéry described her actual contemporaries with but a thin disguise. Her most famous achievement was, however, her Map of the Realm of Tenderness. It was in Clélie that she drew this

"Carte de Tendre." Tendre, or Tenderness, she explained, is the Country of Love through which flows the river of Inclination watering the villages of "Pretty Verses," "Gallant Epistles," "Assiduity," etc., while elsewhere are the less cheerful regions of "Levity," "Indifference," "Perfidy," etc. Or, as Molière makes one of his fair Précieuses declare: "In order to reach the country of Tenderness, which stands on the river Inclination, flowing through the lake of Indifference to the sea of Danger, it is necessary to besiege the town of Respect, carry the villages of Billet-doux, Gallant-note, Pretty Verse, Compliance, Submission, and others, capture the Castle of Lovers'-cares and force the hamlet of Assiduity." And when her irate sire would force her to become engaged upon the spot Molière's Précieuse protests that such a rapid-transit conquest would be "as if Cyrus wedded Mandane at once, and Aronce married Clélie." In his famous satire, Molière is said to have hit off the "Précieuses" in two maidens, Madelon and Cathos, who assume the names of Polixène and Aminte, and completely overruled their plain-going bourgeois father with their high-flown notions. Their rejected lovers decide to be revenged, and in order to disabuse the girls of their illusions send them as new wooers their valets in disguise. One masquerades as the Marquis de Mascarille and the other as the Vicomte de Jodelet.

THE SUPERFINE LADIES.

THE following is the plot of Molière's comedy: Gorgibus, a worthy tradesman of Paris, had allowed two young noblemen to propose to marry his daughters, but the young ladies, who have become infected by the sentimental fashion of the time, are shocked at their plain speech, and reject them. The noblemen in revenge cause their valets, dressed in fine attire, to wait upon the ladies, and converse in fashionable style. Just as the ladies have accepted the valets' attentions, the masters burst in upon them. Our extract is from the first act.

Marotte. Did you call, sir?
Gorgibus. Where are your mistresses?
Mar. In their dressing-room, sir.
Gor. What are they doing?
Mar. Making lip-salve.

Gor. They are always making salve. Tell them to come down. [*Exit Marotte.*

(*Alone.*) I believe these foolish girls have determined to ruin me with their ointments. I see nothing about here but white of eggs, virgin's milk, and a thousand fiddle-faddles that I know nothing about. Since we came here they have used the fat of a dozen hogs at least, and four servants might live on the sheep's trotters they daily require. [*Enter Madelon and Cathos.*

There is great need, surely, for you to spend so much money in greasing your nozzles! Tell me, please, what you can have done to those gentlemen, that I see them going away so coldly. Did I not ask you to receive them as persons whom I intended to give you for husbands?

Mad. What! my father, could you expect us to have any regard for the unconventional proceedings of such people?

Cat. What! my uncle, could you expect any girl, to the smallest extent in her senses, to reconcile herself to their persons?

Gor. And what is there the matter with them?

Mad. A fine way of making love to be sure, to begin at once with marriage!

Gor. And what would you have them begin with—concubinage? Does not their conduct honor you as much as it does me? Can anything be more complimentary to you? and is not the sacred bond they propose a proof of the honesty of their intentions?

Mad. Ah! father, how all you are saying betrays the vulgarity of your taste; I am ashamed to hear you speak as you do, and really you should make yourself acquainted with the fashionable air of things.

Gor. I care neither for airs nor songs. I tell you that marriage is a holy and sacred thing, and that they acted like honorable men in speaking of it to you from the first.

Mad. Really, if everybody was like you, how soon a love-romance would be ended! What a fine thing it would have been if at starting Cyrus had married Mandane, and Aronce had been given straight off to Clélie!

Gor. What in the world is the girl talking about!

Mad. My cousin will tell you, as well as I, that marriage, my father, should never take place till after other adventures. A lover who wants to be attractive should know how to utter noble sentiments, to sigh delicate, tender, and rapturous vows. He should pay his addresses according to rules. In the first place, it should be either at church or in the promenade, or at some public ceremony, that he first sees the fair one with whom he falls in love; or else fate should will his introduction to her by a relation or a friend, and he should leave her house thoughtful and melancholy. For a while, he conceals his love from the object of his passion, but in the meantime pays her several visits, during which he never fails to start some subject of gallantry to exercise the thoughts of the assembled company. The day arrives for him to make his declaration. This should take place usually in some leafy garden-walk, whilst everybody is out of hearing. The declaration is followed by our immediate displeasure, which shows itself by our blushing, and causes our lover to be banished for a time from our presence. He finds afterwards the means to appease us; to accustom us, by insensible degrees, to the rehearsal of his passion, and to obtain from us that confession which causes us so much pain. Then follow adventures: rivals who thwart our mutual inclination, persecution of fathers, jealousy based upon false appearances, reproaches, despair, elopement and its consequences. It is thus things are carried on in high society, and in a well-regulated love-affair these rules cannot be dispensed with. But to plunge headlong into a proposal of marriage, to make love and the marriage settlements go hand in hand, is to begin the romance at the wrong end. Once more, father, there is nothing more shopkeeper-like than such proceedings, and the bare mention of it makes me feel ill.

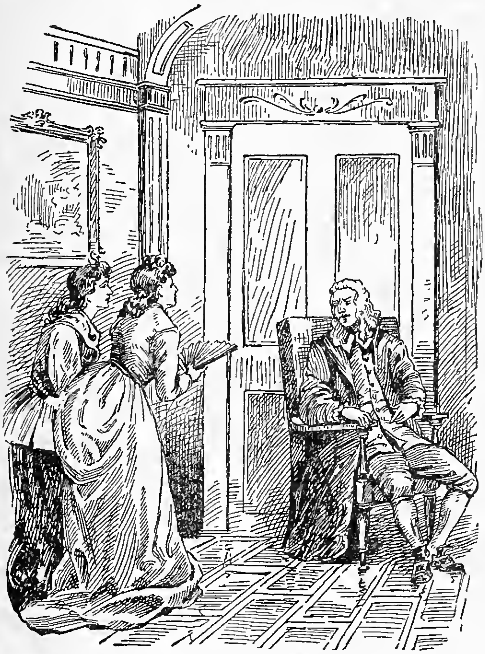
Gor. What the devil is the meaning of all this jargon? Is that what you call "elevated style?"

Cat. Indeed, uncle, my cousin states the case with all veracity. How can one be expected to receive with gratification persons whose addresses are altogether an impropriety? I feel certain that they have never seen the map of the "Country of Tenderness," and that "Billets-doux," "Trifling attentions," "Flattering letters," and "Sprightly verses" are regions unknown to them. Was it not plainly marked in all their person? Are you not conscious that their external appearance was in no way calculated to give a good opinion of them at first sight? To come on a love-visit with a leg lacking adornment, a hat destitute of feathers, a head unartistic as to its hair, and a coat that suffers from an indigence of ribbons! Heavens! what lovers! What frugality of dress! What barrenness of conversation! It is not to be endured. I also noticed that their bands were not made by the fashionable milliner.

Gor. I believe they are both crazed; not a word can I understand of all this gibberish—Cathos, and you, Madelon . . .

Mad. Pray, father, give up those strange names, and call us otherwise.

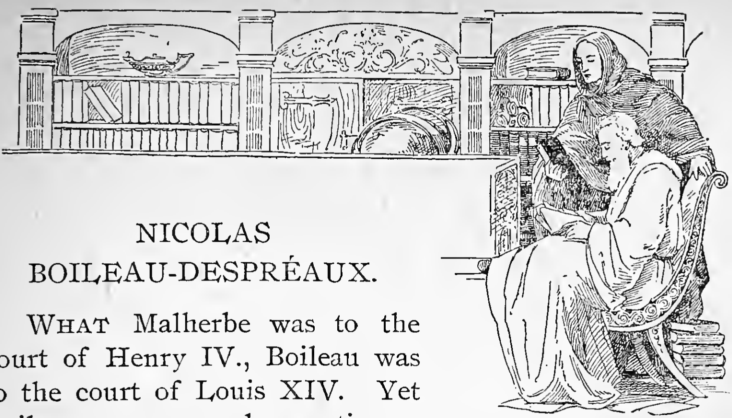
Gor. Strange names! what do you mean? are they not those which were given you at your baptism?



Mad. Ah me! how vulgar you are! My constant wonder is that you could ever have such a soul of wit as I for a daughter. Did ever anybody in refined language speak of "Cathos" and "Madelon," and must you not admit that a name such as either of these, would be quite sufficient to ruin the finest romance in the world?

Cat. It is but too true, uncle, that it painfully shocks a delicate ear to hear those names pronounced; and the name of Polixène which my cousin has chosen, and that of Aminte which I have taken for myself, have a charm which you cannot deny.

Gor. Listen to me; one word is as good as a hundred; I won't have you adopt any other name than those given to you by your godfathers and godmothers; and as for the gentlemen in question, I know their families and their fortune, and I have made up my mind that you shall take them for husbands. I am tired of having you upon my hands; it is too much for a man of my age to have to look after two young girls.



NICOLAS BOILEAU-DESPRÉAUX.

What Malherbe was to the court of Henry IV., Boileau was to the court of Louis XIV. Yet Boileau was no such courtier as Malherbe had been, and did not "crook the knee that thrift might follow fawning." Nor was he of such an unlovable disposition as his illustrious predecessor had been, either in his personal character or in his critical spirit. He was Malherbe's great eulogist, and his life-long friendship with Racine is one of the delightful episodes of French literature.

Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux was born in 1636. He was destined for the law, but his temper caused him to be disgusted, as Montaigne had been before him, with the chicanery that passed for law in France at that day. He took refuge from law in theology, but after taking orders deserted his benefice for the wider pulpit of a satirist. The accidental finding and circulation of a satire, written by him at the age of twenty-five, gave him a fame that determined his career. This earliest satire was an imitation of Juvenal, but, despite his honesty of temperament, Boileau lacked Juvenal's fierce indignation. He was, however, the only sort of a Juvenal that would have been tolerated by King Louis XIV. As it was, although no base flatterer, he held that fickle monarch's favor to the end. With Racine he was appointed as one of the royal historiographers, but neither wrote a word of that elaborate eulogy which was the king's dream of future fame. As a satirist, Boileau made Chapelain and his "Pucelle," Cotin, Quinault, Scudéry, the victims of his darts. These were the shining lights of that epoch. Of Chapelain Boileau complained that he "manufactured verses in spite of Minerva;" and in his "Dialogue des Heros des Romans"

(Dialogues of the Heroes of Romance) he held up in particular "Sapho" (Mademoiselle de Scudéry) to ridicule. In "L'Art Poetique," an imitation of the "Ars Poetica" of Horace, Boileau laid down a code for future French verse, which also exerted a notable effect on English poetry, through Dryden's translation of the poem, and Pope's imitation of it in his "Art of Criticism." The first and fourth books treat of good taste, that maxim of Malherbe; the second book deals with pastoral, elegy, ode, epigram and satire; the third book, with tragic and epic poetry. Boileau's code simply served to increase the mechanical influences that were destined so long to hamper the true spirit of poetry in France. Boileau's own verse is terse and regular like Pope's. In his "Rape of the Lock" Pope also imitated Boileau's other masterpiece, "Le Lutrin" (The Lectern). Boileau's mock-heroic deals with the petty war between a Parisian church treasurer and the master of the choir. All the old allegorical machinery is set in ponderous motion around this airy trifle. It runs on for six cantos. Boileau's "Epistles" are more mature and more grave in tone than his "Satires," although there is excellent fooling in the fourth epistle, where he celebrates the king's conquest of Holland, but complains that the Dutch names interfere with the triumphant rhyming of his exploits.

In 1683 the death of the famous minister Colbert made a vacancy in the French Academy, and the king wished Boileau, already appointed historiographer, to be chosen, but the other candidate was La Fontaine, fifteen years older. Boileau's friends objected to the licentiousness of La Fontaine's tales, but his opponents said, "He has spent his life in ridiculing us," and a large majority declared in favor of the fabulist. Great was the astonishment of the king, but though he might have annulled the election, he simply deferred his approval. Six months later Boileau was elected at the next vacancy, and the Grand Monarque said, "I am pleased with the choice of Despréaux;" and then added, "You may receive La Fontaine; he has promised to be discreet."

In 1700 Addison visited the aged Boileau and had an interesting conversation with him on literature. There was undoubtedly a certain similarity in their minds, and both are noted for their strict morality. Boileau died in Paris in 1711.

THE SATIRIST'S SELF-EXAMINATION.

In his Ninth Satire Boileau-Despréaux discusses with his own mind the rights and duties of Satire.

You're always meddling with some new affair,
Picking eternal quarrels here and there.
Why are my ears so frequently assailed
With cries of authors and of fools impaled?
When will your zeal some due cessation find?
Come, now,—I'm serious,—answer me, my mind!
"My stars!" you answer, "what a mighty fuss!
Why do you let your spleen transport you thus?
Must I be hung, for having given, once
Or twice, a passing comment on a dunce?
Where is the man, who, when a coxcomb brags
Of having written a mere piece of rags,
Does not exclaim,—'You good-for-nothing fool!
You tiresome dunce! you vile translating tool!
Why should such nonsense ever see the day,
Or why such wordy nothings make display?'
"Must this be slander called, or honest speech?
No, slander steals more softly to the breach.
Thus, were it made a doubt for what pretence
M—— built a convent at his own expense,—
'M——?' cries the slanderer, with a solemn whine,
'Why, do n't suspect him,—he's a friend of mine.
I knew him well, before his fortunes grew,—
As fine a lacquey as e'er brushed a shoe.
His pious heart and honorable mind
Would give to God—his filchings from mankind.'
"There is a sample of your slanderer's art,
Which stabs, with vast politeness, to the heart.
The generous soul, to such intrigues unknown,
Detests the soft, backbiting, double tone.
But surely, to expose a wretched verse,
Hard as a stone, and dismal as a hearse,
To draw a line 'twixt merit and pretence,
To throttle him who throttles common sense,

To joke a would-be wit who wears out you,—
This every reader has a right to do.
"A fool at court may every day judge wrong,
And pass unpunished through the tasteless throng,
Preferring (so all standards they disturb)
Theophilus to Racan and Malherbe,
Or e'en pretend an equal price to hold
For Tasso's tinsel as for Maro's [Virgil's] gold.
"Some understrapper, for a dozen sous,
Who shrinks not from the scorn of public view,
May go and take his station at the pit,
And cry down *Attila* with vulgar wit;
Unfit the beauties of the Hun to feel,
He chides those *Vandal* verses of Corneille.
"There's not a varlet author in this town,
No drudge of pen and ink, no copyist clown,
Who is not ready to assume his stand,
And sternly judge all writings, scale in hand.
Soon as the anxious bard his fortune tries,
He is the slave of every dunce who buys.
He truckles low to everybody's whim;
His works must combat for themselves and him.
In preface meek, he gets upon his knees,
To beg *his* candor—whom his verses tease;
In vain,—no mercy let the author hope,
When even his judge stands ready with the rope.
"And must I only hold my peace the while?
If men *are* fools, shall I not dare to smile?
What harm have my well-meaning verses done,
That furious authors thus against me run?
So far from filching their hard-gotten fame,
I but stepped in, and built them up a name.
Had not my verses brought their trash to light,
It would have sunk, long since, to hopeless night.
Where'er my friendly notice had not reached,
Who would have known Cotin had ever preached?
By satire's dashes fools are glorious made,
As pictures owe their brilliancy to shade.
In all the honest censures I have brought,
I have but freely uttered what I thought;
And they who say I hold the rod too high,
Even they in secret think the same as I.

"Still some will murmur,—'Sure, he was to blame;
Where was the need of calling folks by name?
Attacking Chapelain, too!—so good a man!—
Whom Balzac always praises when he can.
'T is true, had Chapelain taken my advice,
He ne'er had versified, at any price;
In rhyme he to himself's the worst of foes;
Oh, had he always been content with prose!'
"Such is the cant in which they talk away.
But is it not the very thing I say?
When to his works I put my pruning-knife,
Pray, do I throw rank poison on his life?
My Muse, though rough, adopts the candid plan
Still to disjoin the poet from the man.
Grant him what faith and honor are his due,
Allow him to be civil, modest, true,
Complaisant, soft, obliging and sincere,—
From me not even a scruple shall you hear.
But when I see him as a model shown,
And raised and worshiped on the poet's throne,
Pensioned far more than wits of greater might,
My bile o'erflows, and I'm on fire to write.
If I'm forbidden what I think to say
In print,—then, like the menial in the play,
I'll go and dig the earth and whisper there,
That even the reeds may publish to the air,
Till every grove and vale, and thicket hears,
Midas, King Midas, has an ass's ears.
How have my writings done him any wrong?
His powers how frozen, or how chilled his song?
Whene'er a book first takes the vender's shelf,
Let every comer judge it for himself.
Bilaine may save it from his bookshop's dust;
Can he prevent a critic's keen disgust?
A minister may plot against *The Cid*,
And every breath of rapture may forbid;
In vain,—all Paris, more informed and wise,
Looks on Ximena with Rodrigo's eyes.
The whole Academy may run it down,—
Still shall it charm and win the rebel town.
But when a work from Chapelain's mint appears,
Straightway his readers all become Linières;

In vain a thousand authors laud him high,—
The book comes forth and gives them all the lie.
Since, then, he lives the mark of scorn and glee
To the whole town,—pray, without chiding me,
Let him accuse his own unhappy verse,
Whereon Apollo has pronounced a curse;
Yes, blame that Muse that led his steps astray,
His German Muse, tricked out in French array.
Chapelain! farewell, forever and for aye!"
  Satire, they tell us, is a dangerous thing;
Some smile, but most are outraged at its sting;
It gives its author everything to fear,
And more than once made sorrow for Régnier.
Quit, then, a path, whose wily power decoys
The thoughtless soul to too ill-natured joys;
To themes more gentle be your Muse confined,
And leave poor Feuillet to reform mankind.
  "What! give up satire? thwart my darling drift?
How shall I then employ my rhyming gift?
Pray, would you have me daintily explode
My inspiration in a pretty ode;
And, vexing Danube in his course superb,
Invoke his reeds with pilferings from Malherbe?
Save groaning Zion from the oppressor's rod,
Make Memphis tremble and the crescent nod;
And, passing Jordan, clad in dread alarms,
Snatch (undeserved!) the Idumean palms?
Or, coming with an eclogue from the rocks,
Pipe, in the midst of Paris, to my flocks,
And sitting (at my desk), beneath a beech,
Make Echo with my rustic nonsense screech?
Or, in cold blood, without one spark of love,
Burn to embrace some Iris from above;
Lavish upon her every brilliant name,—
Sun, Moon, Aurora,—to relieve my flame;
And while on good round fare I daily dine,
Die in a trope, or languish in a line?
Let whining fools such affectation keep,
Whose driveling minds in luscious dulness sleep.
  "No, no! Dame Satire, chide her as you will,
Charms by her novelties and lessons still.
She only knows, in fair proportions meet,

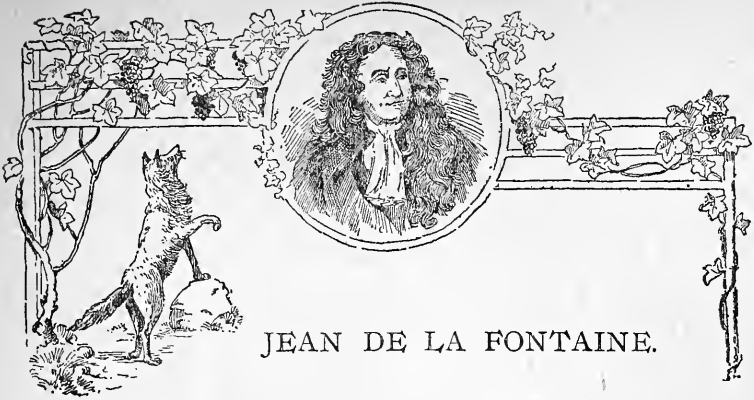
Nicely to blend the useful with the sweet;
And, as good sense illuminates her rhymes,
Unmasks and routs the errors of the times;—
Dares e'en within the altar's bound to tread,
And strikes injustice, vice and pride with dread.
Her fearless tongue deals caustic vengeance back,
When reason suffers from a fool's attack."

THE LAMENT OF SLOTH.

BOILEAU'S mock-epic of "Le Lutrin" (The Lectern) was the model which Pope imitated in his "Rape of the Lock." It consists of six cantos, and originated in a petty quarrel in a church in Paris between the choir-master and the treasurer. The former had removed a large lectern, and the latter undertook to set it up again in the choir. Three partisans of the treasurer set out by night on this errand.

The Moon, who spied from heaven their haughty mien,
Withdrew on their behalf her peaceful light,
Then Discord smiled, and when they caught her sight,
Uttered a cry of joy which pierced the skies.
The air, which groaned at the dread goddess' shriek,
Speeds far as Citeaux there to waken Sloth.
There she within a dormitory dwells;
The careless Pleasures gambol all around:
One, in a corner, kneads the Canon's fat;
Another, laughing, grinds the monks' vermilion:
Indulgence serves her with devoted looks,
And on her Sleep her poppies ever pours.
That evening twice as much—yet all in vain;
Sloth at the noise awakens in alarm:
When Night, e'er her dark mantle wraps the world,
Wounds her anew with a disastrous tale,
Tells of the treasurer's recent enterprise,
How, 'neath the holy Chapel's sacred walls,
She saw three warriors, enemies to peace,
March 'neath the shelter of her sable cloak;
And Discord threatens there more vast to grow;
To-morrow dawn will see a desk appear,
Raised by a crowd of restive mutineers;
Thus Heaven wrote it in the Book of Fate.
At this sad tale, closed by a deep-drawn sigh,
Sloth, all in tears, half-raised upon her arm,

Opens a languid eye, and with faint voice
Lets fall these words, broke off a score of times:
"O Night! what hast thou said? what fiend on earth
Breathes into all hearts fatigue and war?
Ah! where has fled that time, that happy time,
When kings the style of 'slothful' highly prized,
Slept on their throne and served me unabashed,
Trusting their sceptre to some mayor or count?
No busy care approached their peaceful court;
By night they rested, all the day they slept;
Only in spring, when Flora in the plains
Silenced the noisy breathings of the winds,
Four harnessed oxen with slow tranquil pace,
Through streets of Paris dragged the lazy king.
That pleasant age is gone. The unpitying Heaven
Has set upon the throne an ever-active prince. . . .
When by that prince to distant exile driven,
The Church, at least, I thought would shelter me;
E'en there my hope to reign unscared was vain:
Monks, abbés, priors, arm themselves against me. . . .
And now a desk will turn all upside down,
And drives me forth from this loved home again!
Thou kind and sombre comrade of my rest,
To such black forfeits wilt thou lend thy shade?
Ah Night! if in the arms of love so oft
I taught thee pleasures, which I hide from Day,
At least allow not ——." At this word o'ercome,
Sloth feels her tongue lie frozen in her mouth,
And, tired of talking, 'neath the effort sank,
Sighed, stretched her arms, and shut her eyes and slept



JEAN DE LA FONTAINE.

THE great fabulist of France, the most famous of beast fabulists after Æsop, was Jean de La Fontaine. He was born in 1621. With Molière, Racine, and Boileau he enjoyed the happiness of a little select club, the memories of which he has immortalized in his romance, "Les Amours de Cupidon et de Psyché." In this tale Molière figures as Gélaste, Racine as Acante, Boileau as Ariste, and La Fontaine himself as Polyphile. Of these friends Molière, perhaps, apprized La Fontaine most at his true value, while La Fontaine would enthusiastically declare: "Molière, c'est mon homme" (Give me Molière every time). La Fontaine's own deepest ambition was to become a great playwright like his comrade Poquelin, and his first endeavor was a play, "The Eunuch," adapted from Terence. But, although he figured extensively in his own day as a dramatist, and even opera-librettist, it is unnecessary to record here that phase of his career. It may be noted, however, that one of his plays, "The Enchanted Cup," has been played within comparatively recent times at the Théâtre Français. It was by his "Tales" and by his "Fables" that La Fontaine charmed his own generation, and it is as the fabulist alone that he still survives in the memory of this generation.

Throughout his long life La Fontaine was so childlike and personally irresponsible that he reminds one of Goldsmith, and the French writer deserves even more the sobriquet of "Inspired Idiot." However mythical many of the anecdotes of La Fontaine's absent-mindedness, improvidence, and naïveté may be, it is certain that he never fully realized his position as husband and father, his moral obligations even to his contemporaries, his responsibilities as author or man. Nevertheless he was a faithful friend, a tender-hearted, well-meaning fellow, and an outspoken poet according to his own moral lights. Born the son of a "ranger of streams and forests" of the duchy of Château Thierry in Champagne, La Fontaine might have been an independently comfortable, quietly domestic poet all his life. But he practically deserted wife and child, allowed his money matters to go to the dogs, lived in a curious mixture of libertinism and sobriety in Paris, and died at the age of seventy-four regretted rather than esteemed. He was lucky enough to have shelter throughout his unique career. Fouquet pensioned him, in return for the dedication of poems. The Duchess of Bouillon, Anne Mancini, youngest of Mazarin's nieces, became his protectress, and it was for her that he wrote (at the age of forty-three) his "Contes" so scandalously lascivious. While enjoying the delights of comradeship of the quartet of the Rue du Vieux Colombier, he was housed beneath the roof of the Duchess Dowager of Orleans at Luxembourg. On her death he was "adopted" by Madame de Sablière, who declared, on her retirement from the pleasures of society: "I have dismissed all my people, except my dog, my cat, and La Fontaine." She it was who secured the poet's election to the Academy, even over Boileau. On her death another of his old friends, Hewart, hastened to condole with the houseless bard. He found La Fontaine walking with a sorrowful mien along the street. "Come to my home," he exclaimed with a generous outburst of sympathy. "I was just going there," was La Fontaine's unabashed answer. When he died he was probably laid to rest in the cemetery of Holy Innocents. The nurse at his deathbed exclaimed: "Dieu n'aura jamais le courage de le damner" (God will not have the heart to damn him).

La Fontaine awoke to literature only in his manhood. It was Malherbe who proved the happy inspiration, and his new disciple's first effusions were a lot of trivial ballades, epigrams, and rondeaux. At the age of thirty-three he imitated Terence. Champmeslé fathered his early plays. Ten years later appeared his first series of "Tales," and he was forty-seven years old when he gave to the world his original six "Fables." Madame Sévigné, who had, indeed, been able to stand the shock of the "Contes," pronounced these fables divine, and all Paris took up the echo. The "Tales," which had been drawn from the old fabliaux, the Italian novellieri, and even from the later romances of Antoine de la Salle and Beroalde de Verville, had exemplified La Fontaine's keen enjoyment of a good story and his vivid powers of narration. But these "contes pour rire" (tales for laughter) were to be eclipsed by his fables wherein he not only told his beast stories as well, but wherein he hit off almost the whole broad range of human nature in its animal counterparts. As M. Van Laun exclaims: "Does not La Fontaine describe his animals well and caustically? They are men and women disguised as animals, but still having the characteristics of both. The king lion, for example, is like another Louis XIV. . . . After the king come the courtiers, and the fox appears to be the most accomplished of all . . . never at a loss for an excuse, nor for an expedient, proud with his superiors and cringing with his inferiors. Other noblemen appear: the heavy elephant, the rustic bear, the lordly and haughty dog who considers the collar round his neck as a 'trifle,' the long-legged, skinny and proud heron; and all these animals behave as insolently as the real noblemen of Louis XIV.'s court. We must also not forget the curé Jean Chouart, who goes 'gaily behind a body at a funeral,' and counts on the money which he shall receive for his prayers to buy a cask of the best wine; the hermit, a rat, who having taken refuge in a Dutch cheese, answers the deputies of his nation who begged for some assistance because their capital, Ratapolis, was besieged: 'Affairs here below do not concern me any longer; in what can a poor recluse be of any assistance to you? What else can he do but pray Heaven that it may aid you in this?' . . . Now we arrive at the citizens, and La Fontaine, who seems like one of them when he jeers at the nobles, seems a noble when he makes fun of the citizens." La Fontaine is enough of a noble of King Louis XIV., indeed, to relate for distressed France of his day the fable of King Log and King Stork. He ridicules too the rising notion of equality. There is the shadow of La Rochefouçauld upon these satires. But beyond the human interest of his fables, La Fontaine charms by his verse. Not that he possesses the "fine frenzy" of the poet, but he managed to escape from "the Alexandrine prison"—as it has been styled—of the French verse of Malherbe and Boileau. La Fontaine deliberately aimed to be diverse in metre and rhymes, and the result is an imperishable freshness of style in delightful contrast to the arid verses of his formal contemporaries and predecessors. Even Molière's verse is not so enjoyable in itself as is that of Molière's "bonhomme."

The Wolf and the Dog.

A prowling wolf, whose shaggy skin
(So strict the watch of dogs had been)
    Had little but his bones,
Once met a mastiff dog astray;
A prouder, fatter, sleeker Tray
    No human mortal owns.
      Sir Wolf, in famished plight,
  Would fain have made a ration
  Upon his fat relation;
      But then he first must fight;
  And well the dog seemed able
  To save from wolfish table
      His carcass snug and tight.
So then, in civil conversation,
The wolf expressed his admiration
Of Tray's fine case. Said Tray, politely,
"Yourself, good Sir, may be as sightly:
Quit but the woods, advised by me;
For all your fellows here, I see,
Are shabby wretches, lean and gaunt,
Belike to die of haggard want;
With such a pack, of course it follows
One fights for every bit he swallows.
  Come, then, with me and share
  On equal terms our princely fare."
      "But what with you
        Has one to do?"
Inquires the wolf. "Light work indeed,"

Replies the dog; "you only need
To bark a little, now and then,
To chase off duns and beggar-men,—
To fawn on friends that come or go forth,
Your master please and so forth;
For which you have to eat
All sorts of well-cooked meat,—
Cold pullets, pigeons, savory messes,—
Besides unnumbered fond caresses."
The wolf, by force of appetite,
Accepts the terms outright,
Tears glistening in his eyes.
But, faring on, he spies
A galled spot on the mastiff's neck.
"What's that?" he cries. "Oh, nothing but a speck."
"A speck?" "Ay, ay; 't is not enough to pain me,
Perhaps the collar's mark by which they chain me."
"Chain,—chain you? What! run you not, then,
Just where you please, and when?"
"Not always, Sir; but what of that?"
"Enough for me, to spoil your fat!
It ought to be a precious price
Which could to servile chains entice;
For me I'll shun them while I've wit."
So ran Sir Wolf, and runneth yet.

The Cock and the Fox.

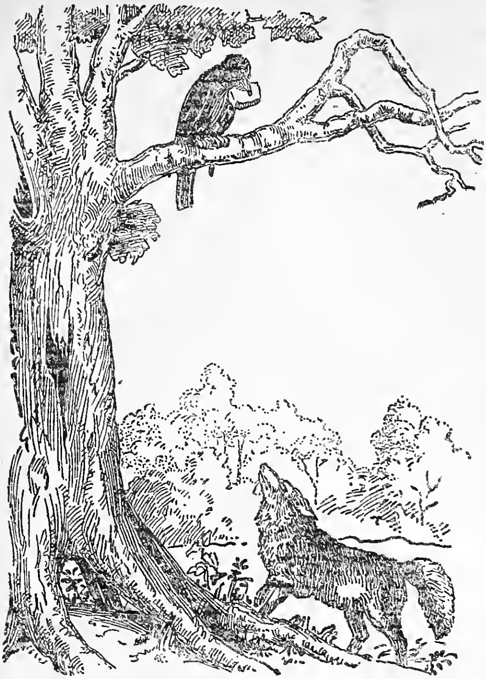
Upon a tree there mounted guard
A veteran Cock, adroit and cunning;
When to the roots a Fox uprunning
Spoke thus, in tones of kind regard:
"Our quarrel, brother, is at an end,
Henceforth I hope to live your friend;
For peace now reigns
Throughout the animal domains.
I bear the news. Come down, I pray,
And give me the embrace fraternal;
And please, my brother, don't delay,
So much the tidings do concern all,
That I must spread them far to-day.
Now you and yours can take your walks

Without a fear or thought of hawks;
And should you clash with them or others,
In us you'll find the best of brothers;
For which you may, this joyful night,
Your merry bonfires light.
But, first, let's seal the bliss
With one fraternal kiss."
"Good friend," the Cock replied, "upon my word,
A better thing I never heard;
And doubly I rejoice
To hear it from your voice:
And, really, there must be something in it,
For yonder come two greyhounds, which, I flatter
Myself, are couriers on this very matter;
They come so fast, they'll be here in a minute.
I'll down and all of us will seal the blessing
With general kissing and caressing."
"Adieu," said Fox, "my errand's pressing,
I'll hurry on my way,
And we'll rejoice some other day."
So off the fellow scampered quick and light,
To gain the fox-holes of a neighboring height,—
Less happy in his stratagem than flight.
The cock laughed sweetly in his sleeve;
'Tis doubly sweet deceiver to deceive.

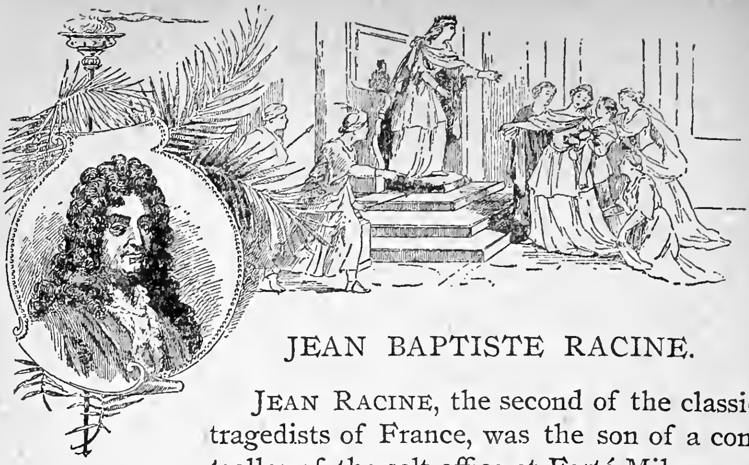
THE HOUSE OF SOCRATES.

A HOUSE was built by Socrates
That failed the public taste to please.
Some blamed the inside, some the out, and all
Agreed that the apartments were too small;
Such rooms for him, the greatest sage of Greece!
I ask, said he, no greater bliss
Than real friends to fill even this.
And reason good had Socrates
To think his house too large for these.
A crowd to be your friends will claim,
Till some unhandsome test you bring.
There's nothing plentier than the name;
There's nothing rarer than the thing.

THE CROW AND THE FOX.



MASTER Crow, perched on a tree one day,
Was holding in his beak a cheese;
Master Fox, by the odor drawn that way,
Spake unto him in words like these:
"Oh, good morning, my Lord Crow!
How well you look! how handsome you do grow!
'Pon my honor, if your note
Bears a resemblance to your coat,
You are the phœnix of the dwellers in these woods."
At these words does the Crow exceedingly rejoice;
And, to display his beauteous voice,
He opens a wide beak, lets fall his stolen goods.
The Fox seized on 't, and said "My good Monsieur,
Learn that every flatterer
Lives at the expense of him who hears him out.
This lesson is well worth a cheese, no doubt."
The Crow, ashamed, and much in pain,
Swore, but a little late, they'd not catch him so again.



JEAN BAPTISTE RACINE.

Jean Racine, the second of the classic tragedists of France, was the son of a controller of the salt office at Ferté Milon, and was born in 1639, three years after the triumphant production of Corneille's "Le Cid." He commenced writing twenty years before Corneille's death, and his earliest verses are a palpable imitation of his predecessor's poetry. The principles enunciated by Corneille served as the guide for Racine in the dramatic art.

The themes of Racine's classical tragedies were taken directly from the Greek tragedies. "Andromaque," based on Euripides, is a picture of pure motherhood; "Iphigénie en Aulide," the drama of rivalry between Eriphile and Iphigenia over Achilles, and "Phédre," the passion of the wife of Theseus for her step-son Hippolytus. The flat reception of this last-named piece nearly drove Racine to become a Carthusian friar.

Racine's famous comedy is "Les Plaideurs" (The Litigants), written in 1668. It is virtually a farce, after the manner of Aristophanes, dealing with the mania of an old judge, Dandin, for pronouncing sentence, and with the fondness of the Countess de Pimbesche and Chicaneau for lawsuits.

The amiable and friendly Racine was more religious in temperament than Corneille. Corneille had been educated by the Jesuits, and translated Thomas á Kempis's "De Imitatione Christi." Racine, though in early life somewhat licentious, was essentially, however, of a religious type, and to the last he remained attached to the Port Royal school of his day. He composed, indeed, a series of "Cantiques

Spirituels" (sacred canticles). He was admitted to the French Academy in 1673, and died in Paris in 1699.

Racine drew from the Bible the plots for his "Esther" (1689), and his crowning masterpiece, "Athalie" (1691). The poet follows the sacred narrative so faithfully that hardly anything more than a general reference to the sources is necessary; and yet the playwright felt himself called upon to give a summary of the biblical story in his own prologue. The central character of Athaliah is painted in powerful colors. She is the daughter of the wicked Jezebel, who had been thrown to the dogs as a punishment for her bloody persecution of the prophets. Athaliah is "another Jezebel"—cruel and bloody-minded, but even in her wickedness always a queen. She has married Joram, King of Judah, but on his death she seeks to extirpate the royal house of David for the sake of Baal. In a dream her mother appears to her and warns her, and she also sees the vision of a young priest. Hastening to the temple she finds the living image, who is in reality the hidden heir to the throne, Joash. Determined to pierce the mystery, she holds a forced interview with the nine-year-old prince. This scene, in which the young Joash is brought into the presence of Athaliah, is full of a high beauty. The childish yet wise simplicity with which he replies to the queen's pressing inquiries, at every step unconsciously foiling her purpose and throwing her into confusion and rage, are exhibited with consummate art. "It is the first and only time," remarked La Harpe in his day, "that one has been inspired to draw from the charm of childhood all the interest of a tragic scene. There is nothing more touching, as witness the effect at the theatre where this scene has affected deliciously every soul." Athaliah's narration of her terrible dream of prophecy, with its picture of the dogs gnawing and snarling over her mother's bones, is stirringly dramatic. The queen's attack on the temple, the arming of the Levites, and Athaliah's tragic death ensue. The tragedy opens on Pentecost, or the Feast of Weeks—the day the giving of the law on Mount Sinai was commemorated, and ends with the anointing and crowning of Joash. Racine declared his choice of this time of action since its features "furnished such variety for the chants of the chorus.'' This chorus is composed of young maidens of the tribe of Levi, headed by a niece of the high priest. Racine's object was to imitate the ancients in thus preserving a continuity of action unbroken by intervals. However undramatic to the present view, these hymns of the chorus are superb triumphs of devotional lyricism, pregnant with majesty and beauty. Both these scriptural plays were performed (without the aid of scenery) by the female pupils of the school at Saint Cyr, founded by Madame de Maintenon. Even the male characters were, according to Racine, "represented by the young ladies, with all the decorum of their sex, which was the easier for them as in ancient times the Persians and the Jews wore long dresses which reached to the ground.'' This prudish remark emphasizes the effeminate nature of Racine's genius. In contra-distinction to the severity of tone of his great predecessor, who is styled "le grand Corneille," the author of "Athalie" is affectionately known as "le tendre Racine.'' Racine was—aside from his two sacred tragedies—the painter of love. Despite his formal classicism we can still appreciate his tenderness. But this trait was accompanied by a lack of virile qualities. Appointed, along with his intimate friend Boileau, as historiographer to the Grand Monarque, he was somewhat too king-worshiping to the last, and his death has even been attributed to over-sensitiveness at the loss of royal favor. In "Esther" he is said to have represented Madame de Maintenon as Esther and the King as Ahasuerus; while Madame de Montespan was put to scorn as the haughty Vashti—a strange use to which to subject a sacred theme truly. But in ''Athalie'' Racine made the high priest caution the youthful King Joash:

You are ignorant of the intoxication of absolute power
And of the bewitching voice of cowardly flatterers.
Soon they'll tell you that the holiest laws
Rule the vile people, but obey the kings,
That a king has no other restraint than his own will;
That he ought to sacrifice everything to his supreme grandeur;
That the people is condemned to tears, to labor,
And must be governed with a rod of iron;
That unless they are oppressed they will oppress sooner or later.

This sentiment must have sounded somewhat discordantly in the Grand Monarque's ear, and it is small wonder "Athalie" had no favor at court. Later Madame de Maintenon persuaded Racine to write out some of his ideas on social reform. "Because he can make verses," exclaimed the irritated king, "does he want to be a minister of state?"

ORESTES AND HERMIONE.

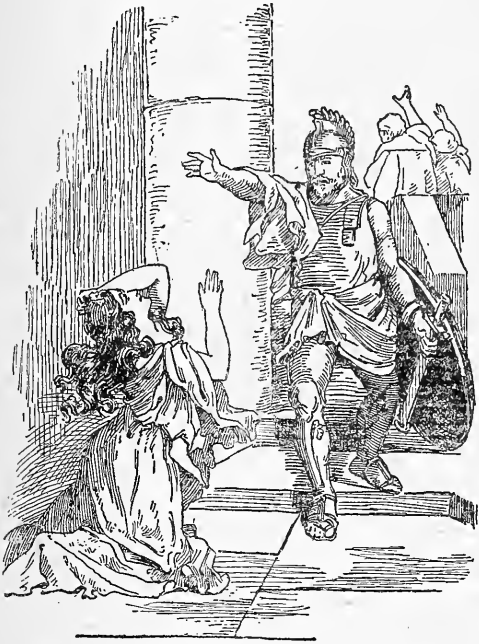
(From the Tragedy of "Andromaque.")

Hermione. WHAT have I done? Where am I? Where is Pyrrhus?
Ye gods! what mean these horrors? I'm undone!
My soul is on the rack! I cannot bear it!
Why do I wander like some guilty ghost?
What brought me to this place? What keeps me here?
The court of Pyrrhus has no room for me!
Do I still doubt if I should love or hate him?
Hard-hearted man! how unconcerned he left me!
Did he once sigh? bestow one pitying look?
Once shed a tear? or speak one soft, kind word?
Did he so much as feign one moment's sorrow,
To calm my griefs, and mitigate his falsehood?
Why am I still thus anxious for his life?
Why do I start at his impending fate?
Shall he, then, live? Shall the base traitor live
To laugh at my distress? No, let him perish!
Be quick, Orestes! Execute my orders!
Alas! my orders! O preposterous guilt!
Can I decree the death of him I love?
Was it for this my soul delighted in him?
Was it for this I left my father's court?
Have I, then, crossed so many realms and seas
To murder Pyrrhus?— [*Cleone enters.*
O Cleone, help me!
What have I done? Is Pyrrhus yet alive?
What say'st thou? Answer me: where is the king?
Cleone. Madam, I saw the cruel prince set forward,
Triumphant in his looks, and full of joy.
Still as he walked, his ravished eyes were fixed
On the fair captive; while through shouting crowds

She passed along with a dejected air,
And seemed to mourn her Hector to the last.
Herm. Insulting tyrant! I shall burst with rage!
But say, Cleone, didst thou mark him well?
Was his brow smooth? Say did there not appear
Some shade of grief, some little cloud of sorrow?
Did he not stop? Did he not once look back?
Didst thou approach him? Was he not confounded?
Did he not —— Oh, be quick, and tell me all!
Cle. Madam, the tumult of his joy admits
No thought but love. Unguarded he marched on,
'Midst a promiscuous throng of friends and foes.
His cares all turn upon Astyanax,
Whom he has lodged within the citadel,
Defended by the strength of all his guards.
Herm. Enough! he dies! the traitor! Where's Orestes?
Cle. He's in the temple with his whole retinue.
Herm. Is he still resolute? Is he still determined?
Cle. Madam I fear ——
Herm. How! Is Orestes false? Does he betray me, too?
Cle. A thousand doubts
Perplex his soul, and wound him with remorse:
His virtue and his love prevail by turns.
He told me Pyrrhus should not fall ignobly,—
Pyrrhus, the warlike son of great Achilles.
He dreads the censure of the Grecian states,—
Of all mankind, and fears to stain his honor.
Herm. Poor timorous wretch! 'Tis false! He basely fears
To cope with dangers, and encounter death;
'Tis that he fears! Am I bright Helen's daughter?
To vindicate her wrongs all Greece conspired;
For her, confederate nations fought, and kings were slain,
Troy was o'erthrown, and a whole empire fell:
My eyes want force to raise a lover's arm
Against a tyrant that has dared to wrong me!
Cle. Madam, like Helen, trust your cause to Greece.
Herm. No! I'll avenge myself: I'll to the temple;
I'll overturn the altar, stab the priest;
I'll hurl destruction like a whirlwind round me!
They must not wed! they must not live! they shall not!
Let me begone! I have no time to lose!

Stand off! hold me not! I am all distraction!
O Pyrrhus, tyrant! traitor! thou shalt bleed!
[*Orestes enters.*
Orestes. Madam, 'tis done; your orders are obeyed:
The tyrant lies expiring at the altar.
Herm. Is Pyrrhus slain?
Or. Even now he gasps in death.
Our Greeks, all undistinguished in the crowd,
Flocked to the temple and dispersed themselves
On every side the altar. I was there:
Pyrrhus observed me with a haughty eye,
And, proud to triumph over Greece in me,
From his own brows he took the diadem,
And bound it on the temples of his captive:
"Receive," said he, "my crown! receive my faith!
Mine and my people's sovereign reign, forever!
From this blessed hour, a father to your son,
I'll scourge his foes: henceforth be he styled
The Trojan king: I swear it at the altar,
And call the gods to ratify my vows!"
His subjects with loud acclamations shook
The spacious dome. Our Greeks, enraged, cried out,
"Revenge! revenge!" broke through the thronging press,
And rushed tumultuous on the unguarded king:
Their eager fury left no work for me.
Pyrrhus awhile opposed their clashing swords,
And dealt his fatal blows on every side
With manly fierceness; till, oppressed by numbers,
Streaming with blood, all over gashed with wounds,
He reeled, he groaned, and at the altar fell.
Haste, Madam, let us fly! Haste to our ships!
They lie unmoored,—our friends attend us there.
Herm. What have they done?
Or. Madam, forgive their rage!
I own your vengeance had been more complete
Had Pyrrhus fallen by me, and had he known
Hermione chastised him by my arm.
Herm. Peace, monster, peace! Go, tell thy horrid tale
To savages, and howl it in the deserts!
Wouldst thou impute to me thy barbarous guilt?
Me wouldst thou make the accomplice of thy crimes?
Hence to thy Greeks, and boast thy foul exploits!

My soul abhors them! I disclaim the deed!
Begone! I know thee not, thou fell barbarian?
What had he done? What could provoke thy madness
To assassinate so great, so brave a man?
Who set thee on?
Or. Oh, grant me patience, Heaven!
With your own lips did you not curse the tyrant,
Pronounce his death, and urge me to destroy him?



Herm. What if, transported by my boundless passion,
I could not bear to see him wed another,—
Were you to obey a jealous woman's frenzy?
You should have div'd into my inmost thoughts:
My heart, though full of rage, was free from malice;
And all my anger was excess of love.
Why did you take me at my word? You saw
The struggles of my soul; you heard me rave:
You should have questioned me a thousand times,
Yet still have doubted, and still questioned on,
Before you ventured on a life so precious.
Or. Hear me but speak: Heaven knows, against my will ——
Herm. Why did you not return? why not consult me
A second time? and, undetermined still,
Again return, and still find new delays?
What had your rash, officious Greeks—dire bloodhounds!
To do with my revenge? What drew you hither?
To bring on me the vengeful woes that haunt you?
Are these the fruits of your detested love?
Your fatal embassy, your hateful presence,

Drove Pyrrhus to my rival, and destroys
Both him and me. He might have loved me still,
Had you ne'er interposed. Avaunt! Begone!
And leave me in Epirus. I renounce
My friends, my country, Greece, and all mankind:
But, chiefly, I renounce thee, monster! thee! [*Exit.*
Or. Am I awake? Where am I? Soft, my soul!
Be not too rash. —— Was that Hermione?
Why should her anger thunder against me?
Was not this blood shed all by her command?
I am, indeed, a most outrageous monster!
A ruffian, murderer, a base assassin!
And all to please a false, ungrateful woman.
Henceforward let the laws of nations cease;
And let the pale that severs right and wrong,
Things sacred and profane, be broken down:
Gods in their temples, kings upon their thrones,
Are not in safety while Orestes lives.
Oh, never more shall my torn mind be healed,
Nor taste the gentle comforts of repose;
A dreadful band of gloomy cares surround me,
And lay strong siege to my distracted soul!

ATHALIAH AND JOASH.

RACINE'S drama "Athalie" is founded on II Kings, chapter xi., and II Chronicles, chapters xxii., xxiii. Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, was the wife of Joram, King of Judah. On learning that Jehu had slain the sons of Ahab, she resolved to destroy all the royal race of David, putting to death even the children of her own son Ahaziah. But one of them, Joash, was saved by his aunt Jehosheba, and brought up under the name Eliakim, by Jehoiada, the high priest. The queen at last meets the boy, attended by Jehosheba, Zechariah, and others, in the temple. She is startled by his resemblance to one whom she had seen in a dream.

Athaliah. Wife of Jehoiada, is that your son?

Jehosheba. I am not his mother; (*pointing to Zechariah*), this is my son.

Ath. And you, child, who is your father? Answer me.

Jehosh. Heaven, till to-day.

Ath. Why should you answer for him? Let him speak.

Jehosh. At so tender an age, what explanation can he give?

Ath. At his age he is innocent: he has no craft to alter the truth. Let him answer for himself.

Jehosh. (*aside*). Great God, put wisdom in his mouth!

Ath. What is your name?

Joash. I am called Eliakim.

Ath. And who is your father?

Jo. I am, they tell me, an orphan, thrown since my birth into God's paternal arms.

Ath. Are you without parents?

Jo. They have forsaken me.

Ath. But you know at least where your home is?

Jo. This temple is my home; I never knew any other.

Ath. But who, then, cared for you in your infant years?

Jo. Does God ever let his little children want? He feeds the birds, and everywhere his hand is seen. I pray to him every day, and every day at his altar he gives me food.

Jehosheba would now take the child away; but Athaliah calls him back.

Ath. What is your daily occupation?

Jo. I worship God. I am taught his Law. In his divine Book I learn to read. And already I begin to write it with my own hand.

Ath. And what does this law teach you?

Jo. That God desires us to love him; that he will avenge, sooner or later, those who blaspheme his holy name; that he is the defender of the timid orphan; that he will crush the proud man, and punish the murderer.

Ath. I understand; but all the people in that place, what are they doing?

Jo. Praising God.

Ath. Does God desire that they should always pray?

Jo. Other exercises are banished from his temple.

Ath. What! have you no other pastime? I pity the sad fate of such a child as you. Come into my palace and see my splendor.

Jo. No; for I should then forget the goodness of God.

Ath. I will not ask you to forget him.

Jo. But you do not pray to him.

Ath. You may do so if you like.

Jo. I should see you kneeling before another god.

Ath. I have my god whom I worship, and you may worship yours: they are both powerful gods.

Jo. You must fear him too. Mine only is God, madam. Yours is nothing.

Ath. If you come with me I will give you every kind of pleasure.

Jo. The happiness of wicked people flows away like a torrent.

Ath. And who are the wicked?

Jehosh. Excuse him, madam; he is but a child.

Ath. (*to Jehosheba*). I love to see how you train him. Now, Eliakim, you have known how to please me. You are not an ordinary child. You see I am a queen, and have no heir. Put off these clothes; abandon this vile office; I wish you to share in all my riches. Try this very day if I keep my promise. Seated at my table, standing at my side, I will treat you as my son.

Jo. As your son?

Ath. Yes. You say nothing.

Jo. What a father should I leave! And for—

Ath. Well?

Jo. And for what a mother!

Ath. (*to Jehosheba*). His memory is faithful, and in all he says I see the teaching of Jehoiada and your own. You employ the quiet in which I leave you to corrupt this simple childhood: you cultivate hate and fury in them—you make my name a horror to them!

Jehosh. In all you have done you have triumphed. But God sees, and is our judge.

Ath. This God, who has so long been your hope, what will become of his prophecies? Let him send you your promised king—this son of David in whom you trust. . . . But we shall meet again. Adieu! I have seen what I wished to see, and I am satisfied.

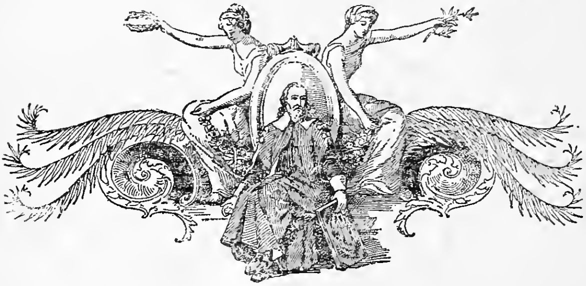
The queen retires, and Jehoiada enters attended by his Levites. He thanks Abner for his protection to Joash, and prepares to cleanse with blood the spots which Athaliah's unholy footsteps had polluted. Then the choir comes in and sings.

Chorus. What star of lustre strikes our eyes?
How bright does this young wonder rise?
With what a noble scorn
He dares seduction's charms despise,
To high achievements born!

One Voice. Whilst at the impious queen's decree
Thousands to Baal basely bend the knee,

An infant's voice has dared proclaim
The one adorable eternal name.
Thus before Jezebel, defiled with blood,
Denouncing vengeance, great Elijah stood.

CHO. Happy, thice happy, must he prove
The child who shares his heavenly Father's love
Who in a blessed hour His voice has heard
And yields obedience to the sacred word!
'Tis his within the hallowed shrine,
By impious footsteps never trod,
To own the bounteous hand divine,
The guardian care of Israel's God.
O happy youth, so early blest,
On Heaven's eternal truth forever rest!



CELTIC LITERATURE.

SECTION II.

EARLY IRISH LITERATURE.

IN the previous notice of Celtic Literature* attention was given chiefly to the ancient Welsh, though some mention was made of the Gaelic. The third division of the Celtic race belongs to Ireland, in part of which its language is preserved to the present day. The early history of Ireland is wrapped in obscurity, which the patient researches and shrewd conjectures of scholars have but partially dissipated. There was no written literature until after Ireland was converted to Christianity, and not until the eleventh century was the "Book of Invasions" compiled from the tribal traditions. There appear to have been five principal peoples, who arrived in the following order: The followers of Partholan, those of Nemed, the Firbolgs, the Tuatha dé Danann, and the Milesians or Scots. The Fomorians are also mentioned as invaders. Probably all of these belonged to the great Celtic race. The Milesians, followers of Milesius or Miled, came from the south, probably from Spain, not long before the Christian era. They excelled in war, and pushed their conquests not only over the island, but into Scotland and Wales. The earliest fragments of Celtic literature are ascribed to them; these were songs preserved by oral tradition.

Although there are some traces of the existence of Christianity at an earlier period, the conversion of the island is justly attributed to the zealous missionary labors of St. Patrick in the fifth century. Ere long the Irish Christians became noted for their faith, and their country was called "the Isle of Saints." From this remote quarter missionary monks were sent to Switzerland and Germany. In their own land many devoted themselves to scholarship, and displayed wonderful art in the illumination of manuscripts. But the destructive invasions of the heathen Norsemen, in the ninth and tenth centuries, interrupted all peaceful pursuits, and cut off the frequent intercourse with the Continent.

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* See Volume I., pp. 316–336.

Celtic literature, so far as it has been preserved, is plainly divided into two divisions, the early Pagan and the Christian; and these again may each be divided into two parts. The scanty relics of the earliest Pagan songs comprise lays of the Milesian invaders and of the bard Cuchulainn. The later Pagan poetry belongs to the period of Fionn (or Fingal) and Oisin (Ossian) in the third century. The early Christian period extends from the fifth century to the ninth; the later Christian period from the tenth century until the English language superseded the Irish in its own home.

There were many strange devices in the structure of Celtic poetry. Rhyme was commonly used with many variations; thus, in the earliest fragment is found the peculiar kind of rhyme called "conaclon," by which the end of one line rhymes with the beginning of the next. Some of these Celtic fashions of verse are found also in Latin hymns of the same period, and the question of their origin is hardly settled. In a hymn of the seventh century the lines are alternately Latin and Irish. Alliteration was employed in Celtic poetry, though not as prominently as in Anglo-Saxon verse. Assonance, or vowel-rhyme, is also found as in Spanish. Our examples are taken chiefly from "Bards of the Gael and Gall," by Dr. George Sigerson, who has carefully followed the original metres.

Amergin's Incantation.

When the Milesians, for the second time, were approaching Erin, they were driven back by a strange wind. Amergin, the Druid poet, then made the incantation, whose "conaclon" rhyme is here imitated.

Fain we seek Erinn,
Faring o'er ocean's
Motions to mountains,
Fountains and bowers,
Showers, rills rushing,
Gushing waves welling,
Swelling streams calling,
Falling foam-thunder,
Under lakes filling:
Willing—(abiding,
Riding rounds, holding
Olden fairs meetly)—
Fleet to lift loyal
Royal king's towers,
Bowers for crowning;
Frowning foes over—
Rover Mil's warlike
Starlike sons therein.
Erinn shall longer,
Stronger, show honor,
On our Milesians.—
Wishing in trouble,
Noble isle's wooing,
Suing, we stay here;
Pray here to sail in,
Wailing maids royal!
Loyal chief-leaders,
Pleaders, blend prayer in.
So we seek Erinn.

Fand's Welcome to Cuchulainn.

Cuchulainn, one of the earliest bards of Erin—perhaps of the first century after Christ—had assisted Labraid in overthrowing his enemies. On his return in his chariot the Princess Fand, who loved him, welcomed him with this song.

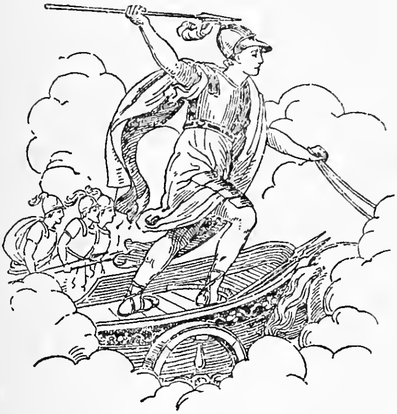
Stately stands the charioteer,
Beardless, young, who hasteth here;
Splendid o'er the plain he speeds
His careering chariot-steeds.

Not to him soft strains are good,
Riding, red with battle blood;
Than loud car that rushing reels
Louder whirr his whirling wheels.

As sight of those swift steeds fleeing,
Stand I still, silent, seeing:
Never hoofs like these shall ring,
Rapid as the winds of spring.

Fifty apples of fair gold
Glitter o'er his mantle's fold;
Never kings on sea or strand
Won their like by battle brand.

On his cheeks four dimples be:
One is gray as shallow sea,
One purple-pale, one like blood;
Brown is one as forest flood.



In his eyes shine seven rays,
Not forgot in poet's praise;
Brown his eyebrows' noble track,
Long his lashes, chafer-black.

His high head,—what head so good?
Erinn knows it, hill and wood—
Doth three waves of color hold,
Brown, blood-red, and crowning gold.

Crimsoned is his cleaving blade,
Bright the hilt of silver made;
Golden bosses gem the shield
White-rimmed, radiant o'er the field.

Foremost he in van of war,
Flashing first, where dangers are:
There is none who bears a brand
Can with true Cuchulainn stand.

Cuchulainn comes to greet us!
Murtemni's chief to meet us!—
They who bring him from afar,
Daughters of Aed Abrat are.

Blood drips from his lofty lance,
In his glance gleams battle fire;
Haughty, high, the victor goes,
Woe to those who wake his ire.

THE FAIR FORT OF CRÉDÉ.

THIS poem of the Fionn period (third century) is ascribed to Cael, son of Crimtann.

Pleasant is her fortress fair,
Men and maids and boys are there,
Druids and the Sons of Song,
Cupmen, doormen, skilled and strong.
Men for steed, and men for stall,
Men to rule the roast in hall;
Supreme o'er all sits Crédé,
Bright, beauteous, gold-haired lady.
Dear to me that pleasant dun,
With soft down to sit upon;
Were the will in Crédè's breast,
Happy here would be my quest.
Full fair the porch, where splendid
Blue wings and yellow blended;
Round the fountain is a wall
Of crystal and carmogal.
Bowl of juice of berry glints,
Whence her eyebrows black she tints;
Clear vats of ale are flowing,
Rich cups and goblets glowing.
Lime-white is her fortress wall,
Rugs and rushes deck her hall,
Silks are seen and mantles blue,
Gold and horns of glossy hue.
Her bower by lakelet beameth,
There gold with silver gleameth,
Wings, brown and crimson, cover
Blent bright, its roof all over.
Pillars twain of green stand there,
By the portal, passing fair;
Spoil of silver, famed of yore,
Forms the beam above the door.
On thy left is Crédé's chair,
Ever fairer and more fair;
By dainty bed 'tis shining,
Alpine gold round it twining.

O'er this chair, like a bower,
Crédé's couch seems to tower;
Orient-built by Tuil's device
With pure gold and gems of price.
Yet a bed beams on thy right
Built of gold and silver white;
From rods of light bronze, looping,
Fall fox-glove curtains drooping.
In that home, the household bright
Seem all destined to delight;
Never mantle dim or bare
'Neath the clusters of their hair.
Wounded men sink to slumbers,
Whilst blood their bodies cumbers,
When they hear birds of Faery
Sing o'er her bower airy.
If she grant me grace at all—
She, for whom the cuckoos call,
Then I, for thanks, will give her
More lays to live forever.

WHERE IS THE SWEETEST MUSIC?

THIS poem from the Dean of Lismore's Book belongs to the Fionn period, or time of triumph, as distinguished from the period of Ossian, or time of lamentation.

Noble news of Song and Valor
  Bear I Balor's fort within,
Little heed I who may hearken,
  If my song be heard of Finn.

Men were gay in golden Allin
  Hill and hall in, far and wide;
Feast was spread and music flowing
  And we saw our Finn preside.

Ossian staunch, and Diarmid stately
  Sate by Luay, greatly strong,
And their friends, at feast and foray;
  Ancient Conan, Oscar young.

"Speak, ye champion chiefs, rejoicing,"
  Rang the voice of Finn around,

"Tell me each, in answer meetest,
Where is sweetest music found?"

"There's one music fit for faming;
Give me gaming," Conan cried,—
Strong his hand for crash of combat,
But his head was sense denied.

"Song of Swords for war unsheathing,"—
With quick breathing came the word,
"Throng of blows when falling fleetest,"—
Seemed the sweetest Oscar heard.

"There is music more endearing,"
Dark-eyed Diarmid did declare;
"Naught comes nigh the voice's cadence—
When the maiden 's soft and fair."

"Sweeter song at dawning dewy—"
Said MacLuay, sharp of spear,
"When the bounding dogs are crying,
And we race the fleeting deer."

"This is Song and this is Music—"
Spoke our lofty Leader old,
"Blowing breezes 'mid moving banners
And an army 'neath their gold.

"Then I fear no bardic passion,
Ossian!" said our Captain strong,
"With my faithful Fianna round me—
This to me is Harp and Song."

THE HOUSEHOLD OF FINN.

THIS short poem, found in the Dean of Lismore's Book, is ascribed to Oisin. For other poems of Oisin see Volume I., p. 320.

I've seen the House of Finn,
No housefolk they of humble fame,
Last night—a Vision thin—
The Hero's household came.

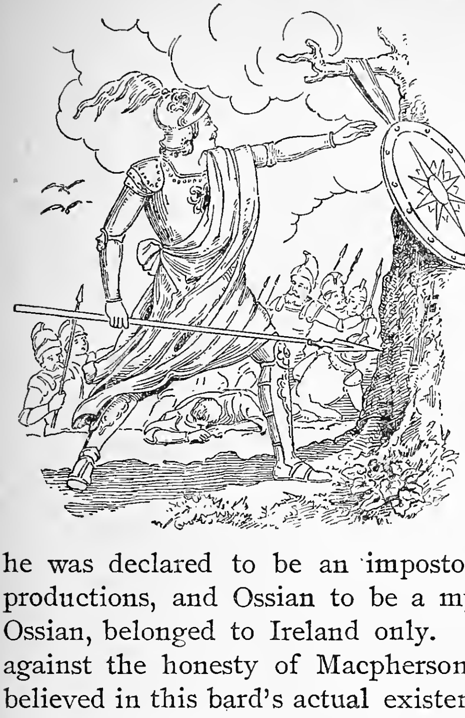
I've seen the House of Art
Where towered apart his brown bright son,

Not one like worth could win—
  I've seen the House of Finn.

None sees what I have seen,
  Finn wield the wondrous sword of Luin,
What woe, that sight—unseen!
  I've seen the House of Finn.

The tale could never cease
  Of woes that rend my heart within,
Then let me Thou have peace—
  I've seen the House of Finn!

OSSIAN.



THIS great bard of antique Gaelic literature, of whose poetry we have already given a flavor, has been styled "The Homer of the Highlands." This sobriquet is due, however, to James Macpherson's pretended translations of the epics "Fingal" and "Temora," rather than to the legendary Ossian, or Oisin. When Macpherson published the poems in 1762–3, he was declared to be an impostor, palming off his own productions, and Ossian to be a myth. The true Oisin, or Ossian, belonged to Ireland only. And yet this is nothing against the honesty of Macpherson, who might easily have believed in this bard's actual existence in some antique, pre-Christian era of Scotland. Beginning with the fifteenth century Gaelic literature is full of allusions to Ossian, or Oisin, as a hero-warrior and bard, and—despite the doubts of Dr. Johnson and his school—a large body of Ossianic poetry has been indisputably found in Caledonia. In Macpherson's day, furthermore, the mass of oral legend was possibly greater. In the "Colloquy of the Ancients," in the Book of Lismore, and in the "Story of Oisin in the Land of the Young" (Fairyland), in the Book of Leinster (as far back as the twelfth century), and in "Leabhar na h-Uidhar," are found verses attributed to Ossian, and exploits told of his father Fionn, or Fingal. Irish lore is full of accounts of this Oisin, who had survived the battle of Gabhra (A.D. 283). By a daring anachronism St. Patrick is said to have loved to listen to him telling tales of those wild times.

But Macpherson himself, in one of his own prefaces, renounces this Irish Fionn, and will have nothing of him, refusing utterly to identify him with his own Scottish hero. Macpherson, who was not a great Gaelic scholar, undoubtedly believed that a Scotch Ossian had once lived. He collected scraps of oral tradition and bardic songs, and connected them together as well as he could, filling the gaps with matter of his own production. In the course of this liberal editing, in which he modeled his own contributory share upon classical poetry and Milton, he managed to mix up songs of entirely different epochs, owing to his ignorance of British history. Thus his epic hero, Fingal, created by such patchwork ingenuity, is represented most impossibly as a Caledonian monarch, who invades the Roman province in the third century, and who aids Cuthullin (who belongs to the first century) against the Norse, who did not sail against Erin until the ninth century. But on this account it would be unjust to denounce Macpherson as a forger, as Dr. Johnson did. Macpherson took unpardonable liberties with his material; but he did not deserve the extreme abuse showered upon him. As Sir Walter Scott believed, he probably wrote himself the landscape descriptions, and supplied the romantic vein of the entire poems.

James Macpherson (1736–1796) was born at Ruthven, in Inverness-shire, the son of a penurious farmer. After studying, under hardships, at King's College, Aberdeen, and at the University of Edinburgh, without taking a degree, he managed to eke out a living as a village schoolmaster and private tutor. While at college he began to write verses. The most ambitious, "The Highlander" (1758), fell as flat as all the rest. But at Moffat, where he met John Home—author of "Douglas"—he showed that lover of ancient Scotland what purported to be the translation of a Gaelic fragment on "The Death of Oscar." More such "translations" followed at the request of Home and of Dr. Carlyle, of Inveresk. Dr. Hugh Blair, of Edinburgh, pronounced this work to be genuine Gaelic poetry, and in July, 1760, Macpherson published his "Fragments of Ancient Poetry Collected in the Highlands." Even Hume believed in Ossian, and Lord Bute soon invited Macpherson to London, where, in 1762, appeared "Fingal," in six books, dedicated to his lordship. Macpherson had already hinted at the existence of such an epic concerning the invasion of Ireland by Swaran, King of Lochlin (Denmark), and a subscription fund had enabled him to travel twice through Scotland to collect its fragments orally. In 1763 appeared "Temora," at Lord Bute's expense.

These poems, despite Dr. Blair's enthusiastic "Dissertation" on the Ossianic poetry, admiringly comparing it to, and contrasting it with, the Greek Homer, awakened great doubt in many quarters, and Dr. Johnson severely attacked their authenticity in his "Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland" (1775). So savage was his literary assault that Macpherson sent him a challenge to a duel, and, that failing, threatened Johnson with a cane. The Great Cham of Literature only purchased a stout oak stick, and wrote Macpherson an indignant letter. Of Johnson's cudgel Macaulay wrote: "If the impostor had not been too wise to encounter it, it would assuredly have descended upon him, to borrow the sublime language of his own epic poem, 'like a hammer on the red son of the furnace.'" Macpherson did little, indeed, to rebut the charges of forgery, although there is a vague statement that he deposited his original Gaelic manuscripts with his publishers, and challenged any one to bear the expense of their publication. These manuscripts were afterwards said to have been lost on his journey to Florida.

But to consider Ossian—Macpherson's Ossian. According to his "translator" the bard flourished about the latter end of the third and the beginning of the fourth century. Fingal, Ossian's hero, is said to have died in the year 283. In those days the Firbolg, or Belgæ, in the south, and the Cael, or Caledonians, to the north, held Scotland between them. Trathal, King of Morven, sent his famous brother Conar to the aid of the Irish king of Ulster, whose daughter had been ravished by the chiefs of Atha, Firbolgs, who sought to become sole lords of all Ireland. Fingal, one of Trathal's descendants, thus crossed from Scotland later to help Conar's kinsmen there against Colc-ulla, chief of Atha. While there Fingal fell in love with Roscrana, the Ulster princess, and she became the mother of Ossian. Fingal crossed over again to help Cormac II., in whose minority occurred the invasion of Swaran. Cormac was afterwards murdered in his palace of Temora by the family of Atha, and Fingal made still another expedition and restored the line of Conar to the throne. This last achievement forms the subject of "Temora." "Events are embellished," remarks Macpherson, "but are yet true to history." "Temora" is not only the history of the first migration of Caledonians into Ireland, but also of the settlement of the Firbolg in that island under their leader Larthoni (*Cf.* "Song of Fonar the Bard," Book VII.). Fingal's sons were Ossian, Fillan, Ryno and Fergus. Fergus became first king of the Scots.

The great epic of "Fingal" opens with a frightened scout's report to Cuthullin of Swaran's landing. Cuthullin is waiting the ships of Fingal from "the lonely isle." Fingal arrives in majesty, and his character is developed as Homer developed that of Achilles. The rash Calmar has urged Cuthullin into the fray, and does not survive the disgrace of defeat. Fingal with his glittering spear hastens to Cuthullin's rescue, and the fierce, proud Swaran is overcome. In the last battle Gaul, a brave warrior, begs of Fingal the honor of the fight alone. Fingal retires magnanimously from the field, but Gaul is imperiled. Perceiving this, Fingal returns and saves the day. He has meanwhile fallen in love with Swaran's sister, Agandecca. She reveals to him a conspiracy against his life, and for that is put to death. But for love of her (her ghost having implored pity), Fingal mercifully pardons Swaran, whom he salutes as "thou brother of Agandecca." The whole poem occurs during the autumn on the shore of Lena. Fingal's love for Agandecca is sung in the song of Carril (Book III.). Fingal here and in all the poems is depicted as blessed with all the virtues of war and peace. He is known by the epithet of "Fingal of the mildest look." He is full of humanity, generosity, mercy, tenderness and solicitude. "My arm," he boasts, "was the support of the injured; the weak rested behind the lightning of my steel." Dr. Blair asserted: "We may boldly defy all antiquity to show us any hero equal to Fingal."

The story of "Temora" is of posterior date to "Fingal." It describes Fingal's descent on the coast of Erin and the three battles by which he defeats the bloody assassin of Cormac and usurper of the throne. Fingal's son Fillan is killed. He is the youngest of his sons, thirsty for glory, but he falls in his first battle. Of him Fingal says to his warriors: "A young beam is before you; few are his steps to war. They are few, but he is valiant; defend my dark-haired son. Bring him back with joy; hereafter he may stand alone. His form is like his fathers; his soul is a flame of their fire." Dying, Fillan murmurs to Ossian: "Ossian, lay me in that hollow rock. Raise no stone above me, lest one should ask about my fame. I am fallen in the first of my fields, fallen without renown. Let thy voice alone send joy to my flying soul." And in this poem we see Fingal, too, the aged warrior, winning triumphs on the last of his battle-fields.

The smaller historical poems, which are generally of the elegiac kind, recount other exploits of Fingal. In Carric-thura, Sulmalla of Lumon, and Cathloda, Fingal sails against the warriors of the Scandinavian coast and the isles of the Orkneys. He even meets the god Odin (Loda) and wounds that foreign deity. In Carric-thura, Fingal saves Cathulla from Frothal's siege. In Comala, he defeats the Roman Caracalla, son of Severus (211 A.D.). In "Oithona" Gaul is the hero and regains his ravished mistress. In "Carthon," Clessamor's son Carthon is captured by Comhal, Fingal's sire, in a raid on the Britons. Seeking revenge later Carthon is killed unwittingly by his own father. In "Croma" Ossian himself goes to the relief of Crothar and kills Rothmar. "Berrathon" is Ossian's swan-song, "the last sound of the voice of Cona." Ossian is portrayed as an aged and blind harper, prince and hero, chanting these lays of olden time, in the twilight of life, to Malvina, the wife of his son Oscar.

The scenery of these poems is the heath by the seashore, the mountain shaded with mist, the torrent in the valley, the oaks and mossy tombs of warriors. Ossian's mythology comprises many ghosts, airy spirits who visit the living. Thus Crugal appears: "A dark-red stream of fire comes down from the hill. Crugal sat upon the beam; he that lately fell by the hand of Swaran, striving in the battle of heroes. His face is like the beam of the setting moon. His robes are of the clouds of the hill. His eyes are like two decaying flames. Dark is the wound of his breast.—The stars dim-twinkled through his form; and his voice was like the sound of a distant stream." In one of the poems there occurs a shower of blood. The sound of death is also heard in the strings of Ossian's harp. The airy hall of Fingal is described in "Berrathon."

It is easy to see, even from this brief review, how romantically Ossian (or Macpherson) has treated these barbarous times and heroes. As Macpherson declared: "Fingal exercised every manly virtue in Caledonia, while Heliogabalus disgraced human nature at Rome." We behold no debasing passions in any of Fingal's warriors.

Dr. Blair, formerly revered as an authority in rhetoric, remarked: "Homer is most sublime in actions and battles; Ossian, in description and sentiment. He is even ahead of the polite and refined Virgil. . . . We find tenderness, and and even delicacy of sentiment, greatly predominant over fierceness and barbarity. Our hearts are melted with the softest feelings, and at the same time elevated with the highest ideas of magnanimity, generosity and true heroism. . . . Two great characteristics of Ossian's poetry are tenderness and sublimity. It breathes nothing of the gay or cheerful kind; an air of solemnity and seriousness is diffused over the whole. He moves perpetually in the high region of the grand and the pathetic. . . . His poetry, more perhaps than that of any other writer, deserves to be styled, 'The Poetry of the Heart.'"

It was as "Poetry of the Heart" that Ossian attracted and conquered the literary mind of all Europe a century ago. The Romanticists of Germany, Italy, and France saw not the incongruousness of such a hero as Fingal in a barbaric land and age. To them he represented lordly human nature untrammeled by civilization and convention. They hailed him as a revelation of their own theories, and reveled in his sensibility and romantic tenderness. Thus Ossian became a potent literary factor of the close of the eighteenth century. The "Stormsters" of Germany eulogized him;

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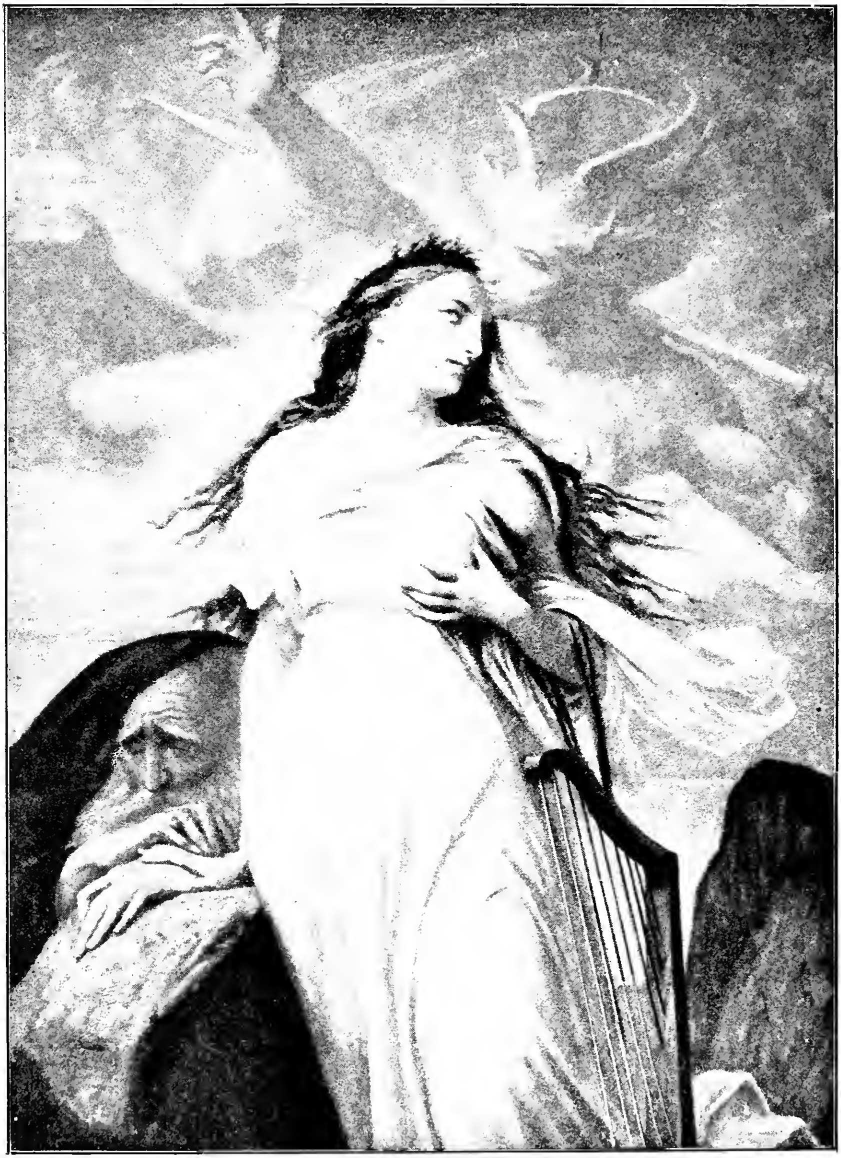


J. BARRIAS, PINX

MALVINA LISTENING TO THE SPIRIT OF OSCAR

Schiller admired his "great nature;" Goethe treated of Fingal in his Song of Selma in the "Sorrows of Werther;" Coleridge and Byron imitated Ossian; Lamartine, Hugo and the Cénacle read him constantly. Even Napoleon Bonaparte relished Ossian's songs in Abbé Cesarotti's Italian translation. "The eagerness with which these poems have been received abroad," stated Macpherson, "is a recompense for the coldness with which a few have affected to treat them at home."

It may be added that Macpherson, thanks to Lord Bute, was then rich. As agent for an East-Indian nabob he amassed a fortune. He pursued his literary work to the end, with a History of Britain and a translation of the Iliad—received with ridicule. He also attempted to answer "Junius," and wrote for Lord North's ministry a reply to the Declaration of the Continental Congress of the new American nation.

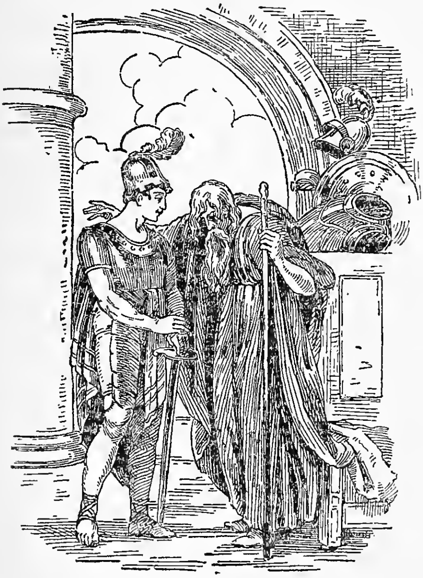
CROMA.

MALVINA, the daughter of Toscar, is overheard by Ossian bewailing the loss of her husband Oscar, whom she sees in her dreams. Ossian, his father, attempts to remove her grief by reciting one of his own early exploits, when he went to aid Crothar, the blind King of Cromar, against the invader Rothmar.

"It was the voice of my love! seldom art thou in the dreams of Malvina! Open your airy halls, O father of Toscar of shields! Unfold the gates of your clouds: the steps of Malvina are near. I have heard a voice in my dream. I feel the fluttering of my soul. Why didst thou come, O blast! from the dark-rolling face of the lake? Thy rustling wing was in the tree; the dream of Malvina fled. But she beheld her love when his robe of mist flew on the wind. A sunbeam was on his skirts, they glittered like the gold of the stranger; it was the voice of my love! seldom comes he to my dreams!

"But thou dwellest in the soul of Malvina, son of mighty Ossian! My sighs arise with the beam of the east; my tears descend with the drops of night. I was a lovely tree, in thy presence, Oscar, with all my branches round me; but thy death came like a blast from the desert, and laid my green head low. The spring returned with its showers; no leaf of mine arose! The virgins saw me silent in the hall; they touched the harp of joy. The tear was on the cheek of Malvina: the virgins beheld me in my grief. Why art thou sad, they said, thou first of the maids of Lutha! Was he lovely as the beam of the morning, and stately in thy sight?"

Pleasant is thy song in Ossian's ear, daughter of streamy Lutha! Thou hast heard the music of departed bards in the dream of thy rest, when sleep fell on thine eyes, at the murmur of Moruth. When thou didst return from the chase in the day of the sun, thou hast heard the music of bards, and thy song is lovely! It is lovely, O Malvina! but it melts the soul. There is a joy in grief when peace dwells in the breast of the sad. But sorrow wastes the mournful, O daughter of Toscar! and their days are few! They fall away, like the flower on which the sun hath looked in his strength, after the mildew has passed over it, when its head is heavy with the drops of night. Attend to the tales of Ossian, O maid! He remembers the days of his youth!



The king commanded; I raised my sails, and rushed into the bay of Croma; into Croma's sounding bay in lovely Innisfail. High on the coast arose the towers of Crothar, king of spears; Crothar renowned in the battles of his youth; but age dwelt then around the chief. Rothmar had raised the sword against the hero; and the wrath of Fingal burned. He sent Ossian to meet Rothmar in war, for the chief of Croma was the friend of his youth. I sent the bard before me with songs. I came into the hall of Crothar. There sat the chief amidst the arms of his fathers, but his eyes had failed.

His gray locks waved around a staff, on which the warrior leaned. He hummed the song of other times; when the sound of our arms reached his ears Crothar rose, stretched his aged hand, and blessed the son of Fingal.

"Ossian," said the hero, "the strength of Crothar's arm has failed. Oh, could I lift the sword, as on the day that Fingal fought at Strutha! He was the first of men; but Crothar had also his fame. The king of Morven praised me; he placed on my arm the bossy shield of Calthar, whom the king had slain in his wars. Dost thou not behold it on the wall? for Crothar's eyes have failed. Is thy strength like thy father's, Ossian? Let the aged feel thine arm!"

I gave my arm to the king; he felt it with his aged hands. The sigh rose in his breast, and his tears came down. "Thou art strong, my son," he said, "but not like the king of Morven! But who is like the hero among the mighty in war? Let the feast of my hall be spread; and let my bards exalt the song. Great is he that is within my walls, ye sons of echoing Croma!" The feast is spread. The harp is heard; and joy is in the hall. But it was joy covering a sigh, that darkly dwelt in every breast. It was like the faint beam of the moon spread on a cloud in heaven. At length the music ceased, and the aged king of Croma spoke; he spoke without a tear, but sorrow swelled in the midst of his voice.

"Son of Fingal! beholdest thou not the darkness of Crothar's joy? My soul was not sad at the feast, when my people lived before me. I rejoiced in the presence of strangers, when my son shone in the hall. But, Ossian, he is a beam that is departed. He left no streak of light behind. He is fallen, son of Fingal! in the wars of his father. Rothmar, the chief of grassy Tromlo, heard that these eyes had failed; he heard that my arms were fixed in the hall, and the pride of his soul arose! He came towards Croma; my people fell before him. I took my arms in my wrath, but what could sightless Crothar do? My steps were unequal; my grief was great. I wished for the days that were past; days wherein I fought and won in the field of blood. My son returned from the chase: the fair-haired Fovar-gormo. He had not lifted his sword in battle, for his arm was young. But the soul of the youth was great; the fire of valor burned in his eyes. He saw the disordered steps of his father, and his sigh arose—'King of Croma,' he said, 'is it because thou hast no son, is it for the weakness of Fovar-gormo's arm that thy sighs arise? I begin, my father, to feel my strength; I have drawn the sword of my youth, and I have bent the bow. Let me meet this Rothmar, with the sons of Croma: let me meet him, O my father! I feel my burning soul!' 'And thou shalt meet him,'' I said, "son of the sightless Crothar! But let others advance before thee that I may hear the tread of thy feet at thy return; for my eyes behold thee not, fair-haired Fovar-gormo.' He went; he met the foe; he fell. Rothmar advances to Croma. He who slew my son is near, with all his pointed spears.''

"This is no time to fill the shell,'' I replied, and took my spear! My people saw the fire of my eyes; they all arose around. Through night we strode along the heath. Gray morning rose in the east. A green narrow vale appeared before us; nor wanting are its winding streams. The dark host of Rothmar are on its banks, with all their glittering arms. We bound along the vale. They fled. Rothmar sunk beneath my sword! Day had not descended in the west, when I brought his arms to Crothar. The aged hero felt them with his hands, and joy brightened over all his thoughts.

The people gather to the hall! The shells of the feast are heard. Ten harps are strung; five bards advance, and sing by turns the praise of Ossian; they poured forth their burning souls, and the string answered to their voice. The joy of Croma was great, for peace returned to the land. The night came on with silence; the morning returned with joy. No foe came in darkness with his glittering spear. The joy of Croma was great, for the gloomy Rothmar had fallen!

I raised my voice for Fovar-gormo, when they laid the chief in earth. The aged Crothar was there, but his sigh was not heard. He searched for the wound of his son, and found it in his breast. Joy rose in the face of the aged. He came and spoke to Ossian. "King of spears,'' he said, "my son has not fallen without his fame. The young warrior did not fly, but met death as he went forward in his strength. Happy are they who die in youth, when their renown is heard! The feeble will not behold them in the hall, or smile at their trembling hands. Their memory shall be honored in song; the young tear of the virgin will fall. But the aged wither away by degrees; the fame of their youth, while yet they live, is all forgot. They fall in secret. The sigh of their soul is not heard. Joy is around their tomb; the stone of their fame is placed without a tear. Happy are they who die in their youth, when their renown is around them."

CUTHULLIN'S COUNCIL OF WAR.

(From Fingal, Book I.)

CUTHULLIN, general of the Irish tribes in the minority of King Cormac, is informed of the landing of Swaran, King of Lochlin, and calls a council of chiefs. They resolve to fight, but on the march three heroes are missing. Fergus arriving tells of the death of the other two.

"Hail," said Cuthullin, "sons of the narrow vales! hail, hunters of the deer! Another sport is drawing near: it is like the dark rolling of that wave on the coast! Or shall we fight, ye sons of war! or yield green Erin to Lochlin? O Connal, speak, thou first of men! thou breaker of the shields! thou hast often fought with Lochlin: wilt thou lift thy father's spear?"

"Cuthullin!" calm the chief replied, "the spear of Connal is keen. It delights to shine in battle, to mix with the blood of thousands. But though my hand is bent on fight, my heart is for the peace of Erin. Behold, thou first in Cormac's war, the sable fleet of Swaran. His masts are many on our coasts, like reeds on the lake of Lego. His ships are forests clothed with mists, when the trees yield by turns to the squally wind. Many are his chiefs in battle. Connal is for peace. Fingal would shun his arm, the first of mortal men! Fingal who scatters the mighty, as stormy winds the echoing Cona; and night settles with all her clouds on the hill!"

"Fly, thou man of peace!" said Calmar, "fly," said the son of Matha; "go, Connal, to thy silent hills, where the spear never brightens in war! Pursue the dark-brown deer of Cromla: stop with thine arrows the bounding roes of Lena.

But blue-eyed son of Semo, Cuthullin, ruler of the field, scatter thou the sons of Lochlin! roar through the ranks of their pride. Let no vessel of the kingdom of snow bound on the dark-rolling waves of Inistore. Rise, ye dark winds of Erin, rise! roar, whirlwinds of Lara of hinds! Amid the tempest let me die, torn, in a cloud, by angry ghosts of men; amid the tempest let Calmar die, if ever chase was sport to him, so much as the battle of shields!"

"Calmar," Connal slow replied, "I never fled, young son of Matha! I was swift with my friends in fight; but small is the fame of Connal! The battle was won in my presence! the valiant overcome! But, son of Semo, hear my voice, regard the ancient throne of Cormac. Give wealth and half the land for peace, till Fingal shall arrive on our coast. Or, if war be thy choice, I lift the sword and spear. My joy shall be in the midst of thousands; my soul shall lighten through the gloom of the fight!"

"To me," Cuthullin replies, "pleasant is the noise of arms! pleasant as the thunder of heaven, before the shower of spring! But gather all the shining tribes, that I may view the sons of war. Let them pass along the heath, bright as the sunshine before a storm, when the west wind collects the clouds, and Morven echoes over all her oaks! But where are my friends in battle? the supporters of my arm in danger? Where art thou, white-bosomed Câthba? Where is that cloud in war, Duchômar? Hast thou left me, O Fergus! in the day of the storm? Fergus, first in our joy at the feast! son of Rossa! arm of death! comest thou like a roe from Malmor? like a hart from thy echoing hills? Hail, thou son of Rossa! what shades the soul of war?"

"Four stones," replied the chief, "rise on the grave of Câthba. These hands have laid in earth Duchômar, that cloud in war! Câthba, son of Torman! thou wert a sunbeam in Erin. And thou, O valiant Duchômar! a mist of the marshy Lano, when it moves on the plains of autumn, bearing the death of thousands along. Morna! fairest of maids! calm is thy sleep in the cave of the rock! Thou hast fallen in darkness, like a star, that shoots across the desert; when the traveler is alone, and mourns the transient beam!"

"Say," said Semo's blue-eyed son, "say how fell the chiefs of Erin. Fell they by the sons of Lochlin, striving in the battle of heroes? Or what confines the strong in arms to the dark and narrow house?"

"Câthba," replied the hero, "fell by the sword of Duchômar at the oak of the noisy streams. Duchômar came to Tura's cave; he spoke to the lovely Morna. 'Morna, fairest among women, lovely daughter of strong-armed Cormac! Why in the circle of stones; in the cave of the rock alone? The stream murmurs along. The old tree groans in the wind. The lake is troubled before thee: dark are the clouds of the sky! But thou art snow on the heath; thy hair is the mist of Cromla, when it curls on the hill, when it shines to the beam of the west! Thy breasts are two smooth rocks seen from Branno of streams. Thy arms, like two white pillars in the halls of the great Fingal.'

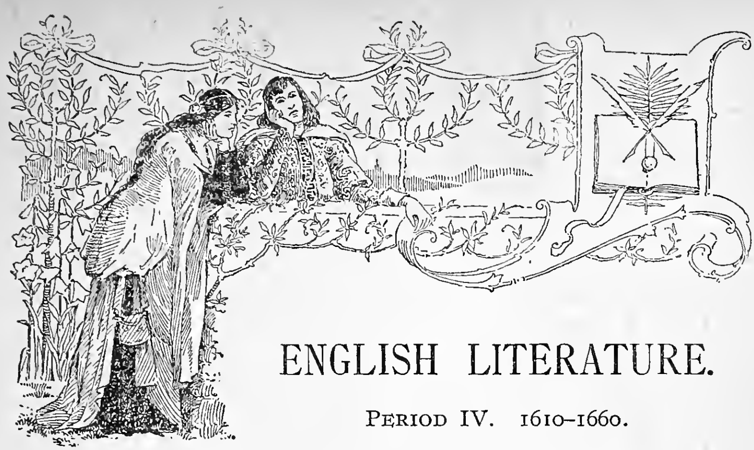
"'From whence,' the fair-haired maid replied, 'from whence Duchômar, most gloomy of men? Dark are thy brows and terrible! Red are thy rolling eyes! Does Swaran appear on the sea? What of the foe, Duchômar?' 'From the hill I return, O Morna, from the hill of the dark-brown hinds. Three have I slain with my bended yew. Three with my long-bounding dogs of the chase. Lovely daughter of Cormac, I love thee as my soul: I have slain one stately deer for thee. High was his branchy head, and fleet his feet of wind.' 'Duchômar,' calm the maid replied, 'I love thee not, thou gloomy man! hard is thy heart of rock; dark is thy terrible brow. But Câthba, young son of Torman, thou art the love of Morna. Thou art a sunbeam, in the day of the gloomy storm. Sawest thou the son of Torman, lovely on the hill of his hinds? Here the daughter of Cormac waits the coming of Câthba!'"

"'Long shall Morna wait,' Duchômar said, 'long shall Morna wait for Câthba! Behold this sword unsheathed! Here wanders the blood of Câthba. Long shall Morna wait. He fell by the stream of Branno. On Croma I will raise his tomb, daughter of blue-shielded Cormac! Turn on Duchômar thine eyes; his arm is strong as a storm.' 'Is the son of Torman fallen?' said the wildly-bursting voice of the maid;

'is he fallen on his echoing hills, the youth with the breast of snow? the first in the chase of hinds! the foe of the strangers of ocean! Thou art dark to me, Duchômar; cruel is thine arm to Morna! Give me that sword, my foe! I loved the wandering blood of Câthba!'

"He gave the sword to her tears. She pierced his manly breast! He fell, like the bank of a mountain stream, and stretching forth his hand, he spoke: 'Daughter of blue-shielded Cormac! Thou hast slain me in youth! the sword is cold in my breast! Morna, I feel it cold. Give me to Moina the maid. Duchômar was the dream of her night! She will raise my tomb; the hunter shall raise my fame. But draw the sword from my breast. Morna, the steel is cold!' She came, in all her tears she came; she drew the sword from his breast. He pierced her white side! He spread her fair locks on the ground! Her bursting blood sounds from her side: her white arm is stained with red. Rolling in death she lay. The cave re-echoed to her sighs."

"Peace," said Cuthullin, "to the souls of the heroes! their deeds were great in fight. Let them ride around me on clouds. Let them show their features of war. My soul shall then be firm in danger; mine arm like the thunder of heaven! But be thou on a moonbeam, O Morna! near the window of my rest; when my thoughts are of peace; when the din of arms is past. Gather the strength of the tribes! Move to the wars of Erin!"



ENGLISH LITERATURE.

Period IV. 1610–1660.

VIGOROUS expression of national life and intense patriotic enthusiasm marked the reign of the Virgin Queen. The same elements worked, though with less fervor, in the time of her pedantic successor, James Stuart, son of the rival queen, whom she had beheaded. Brought up among the Presbyterians of Scotland, he was but too well acquainted with theology, and aiming at the fame of Solomon, won for himself the reputation of "the wisest fool in Christendom." In the first year of his reign he presided at the Savoy Conference, called to settle the rising disputes of the Puritans and the Anglican clergy. The chief result of the conference was the arrangement for a new translation of the Bible. This was duly carried out, and the work being dedicated to the king, is usually called the Authorized Version (1611).

The dramatic and lyrical outburst which had given glory to Elizabeth's golden time continued with little abatement into the reign of James. Shakespeare was the greatest living writer at his accession, but his career closed with the production of "Henry VIII." in 1613. In fact, some critics think that he bade farewell to the stage in "The Tempest," which was performed in 1611, since in it the magician Prospero breaks his wand, burns his books, and departs from the magic island. Shakespeare's plays were first collected in a folio in 1623. The plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, the literary Damon and Pythias of England, belong entirely to the reign of James I.; the romantic Fletcher, who survived his younger comrade nine years, produced more plays alone. They hit the popular demand better even than Shakespeare, so that Dryden declared that in his time two of their plays were "acted through the year for one of Shakespeare's." In "The Knight of the Burning Pestle," they burlesqued the high-flown chivalric romances. The other dramatists of this reign were Tourneur, Middleton, Dekker, Chapman, Heywood, Webster, and Massinger, the last of whom continued active during fifteen years of the reign of Charles I. Massinger was the best of these later dramatists, but many of his plays are lost. As the Puritan controversy waxed fierce, the court party fell into disfavor in the city of London, and in 1648 the theatres were closed by the government.

The chief writers of Elizabeth's time, with glowing insular patriotism, expressed their opposition to the supremacy of the Pope, but otherwise they accepted the mixed classical and Christian culture then recognized in the courts of France and Italy. The Puritans, who were steadily increasing in numbers, followed the lead of the Reformer Calvin, and sought to remodel society as well as the Church according to the patterns furnished by the Scriptures. They severely rebuked the attempts of the humorists to revive in song the praises, if not the actual worship, of Apollo, Bacchus and Venus. Those who had the divine gift of poetry were called to compose hymns of Zion and to versify the Psalms of David. And in large measure their earnest faith was successful in removing mountains. The established Church of England for a time inclined to Calvinism in doctrine, as the Thirty-nine Articles still attest. But under the Stuarts the bishops and clergy fell back to Arminianism. James I. hated a Puritan as one who would deny a divine right of rule in bishops, and therefore had little belief in the divine authority of the king. Bishop Richard Hooker (1553–1600) constructed in his "Ecclesiastical Polity" the chief bulwark of the Anglican Church. When the Puritans gained the upper hand Bishop Jeremy Taylor (1613–1667) preached the doctrine of toleration in his "Discourse on the Liberty of Prophesying" (1648), and published devotional books of merit.

The old scholastic philosophy fell into disrepute with the national change of religion. When philosophical study revived, it turned away from the abstractions of formal logic and bewildering metaphysics, and sought to investigate the laws of the natural world and of the human mind as its interpreter. Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, is honored as the founder of this Inductive Philosophy in his "Advancement of Learning" and "Novum Organum." But though he marked out noble plans, his own life was too much engaged in labors at the bar, on the bench, and in the council-chamber, to permit him to carry them into execution. His contributions to literature proper are his "Essays," "Wisdom of the Ancients," or fanciful explanations of ancient mythology, and the incomplete "New Atlantis," a description of an imaginary commonwealth.

The activity of theological controversy and philosophical discussion turned some minds back to the mediæval allegories, and perhaps helped to produce a new school of poetry which is called "the metaphysical." Donne was the acknowledged leader, but the Anglican Herbert, the Catholic Crashaw, and the more natural Cowley were noted members of the school. Their poems are marked by far-fetched "conceits," tracing curious resemblances between remote and diverse objects. Herrick, though a clergyman, was a worldly lyrist, belonging in spirit to the early Elizabethans.

But the crowning glory of the literature of this period was the Puritan Milton, of whom Wordsworth has said, "Thy spirit was a star, and dwelt apart." Overflowing with classical learning even in early life, he wrote the masque "Comus," the elegy "Lycidas," and the twin pastorals "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," whose Italian titles attest his familiarity with the poets of Southern Europe. From his travels in that region, he felt that duty called him to return to take part in the struggle between King and Parliament. In a Latin treatise he defended the beheading of King Charles, yet after the Restoration he was unmolested by Charles' lenient son. Deprived of natural light, his undaunted spirit turned to a long-meditated epic of transcendent interest, and he sang in sublime strains of "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained."

Finally in his "Samson Agonistes" he presented a hero triumphant in defeat. Though produced after the overthrow of the Puritan rule, these works are the crowning monument of that ascendancy.

SAMUEL DANIEL.

THOUGH Daniel was deemed worthy of succeeding Spenser as poet laureate, few of his literary rank are so little known to the present day by their works. His career is interesting. Born in 1562, he entered Magdalen College, Oxford, and became tutor to the daughter of the Earl of Northumberland. His first book came out in 1592, made up of the Sonnets to Delia and the "Complaint of Rosamond." Three years later was issued the historical poem entitled "The First Four Books of the Civil Wars," which was afterwards expanded into eight books, and throughout them all the history outweighs the poetry, stately though the lines are. In 1601 he published "Epistles to Great Personages in Verse," and on petition of his brother-in-law, John Florio, translator of Montaigne, Daniel was patronized by the court. He was appointed Master of the Queen's Revels, in which capacity he produced a series of masques and pastoral comedies. In addition to his poetical stories of the wars, Daniel published a prose History of England. Other court offices were given him, enabling him to work in peace of mind. His last years were spent on his farm in Somerset, where he died in 1619.

A high level of dignity is sustained throughout all the works of "well-languaged Daniel." He gave his sanction to the sonnet, in its closing rhymed couplet form, and produced not a few that compare with the best of the Elizabethan period. Of his dramatic writings "Hymen's Triumph" is accepted as the best.

RICHARD THE SECOND'S SOLILOQUY.

WHETHER the soul receives intelligence,
  By her near genius, of the body's end,
And so imparts a sadness to the sense,
  Foregoing ruin whereto it doth tend;

Or whether nature else hath conference
  With profound sleep, and so doth warning send
By prophetizing dreams, what hurt is near,
  And gives the heavy careful heart to fear:

However it is so, the now sad king,
  Tossed here and there his quiet to confound,
Feels a strange weight of sorrow gathering
  Upon his trembling heart, and sees no ground;
Feels sudden terror bring cold shivering;
  Lists not to eat, still muses, sleeps unsound;
His senses droop, his steady eyes unquick,
  And much he ails, and yet he is not sick.

The morning of that day which was his last,
  After a weary rest, rising to pain,
Out at a little grate his eyes he cast
  Upon those bordering hills and open plain,
And views the town, and sees how people passed;
  Where others' liberty makes him complain
The more his own, and grieves his soul the more,
  Conferring captive crowns with freedom poor.

"O happy man," saith he, "that, lo, I see,
  Grazing his cattle in those pleasant fields,
If he but knew his good. How blessed he
  That feels not what affliction greatness yields!
Other than what he is he would not be,
  Nor change his state with him that sceptre wields.
Thine, thine is that true life: that is to live,
  To rest secure, and not rise up to grieve.

"Thou sitt'st at home safe by thy quiet fire,
  And hear'st of others' harms, but fearest none:
And there thou tell'st of kings, and who aspire,
  Who fall, who rise, who triumph, who do moan.
Perhaps thou talk'st of me, and dost inquire
  Of my restraint, why here I live alone,
And pitiest this my miserable fall;
  For pity must have part—envy not all.

"Thrice happy you that look as from the shore,
  And have no venture in the wreck you see;

No interest, no occasion to deplore
  Other men's travails, while yourselves sit free.
How much doth your sweet rest make us the more
  To see our misery, and what we be:
Whose blinded greatness, ever in turmoil,
  Still seeking happy life, makes life a toil."

SLEEP.

CARE-CHARMER Sleep, son of the sable Night,
  Brother to Death, in silent darkness born,
Relieve my anguish, and restore the light,
  With dark forgetting of my care, return,
And let the day be time enough to mourn
  The shipwreck of my ill-advised youth;
Let waking eyes suffice to wail their scorn,
  Without the torments of the night's untruth.
Cease, dreams, the images of day-desires,
  To model forth the passions of to-morrow;
Ne'er let the rising sun prove you liars,
  To add more grief, to aggravate my sorrow.
Still let me sleep embracing clouds in vain,
And never wake to feel the day's disdain.

MICHAEL DRAYTON.

MOST prolific of poets of that fruitful season, Drayton set himself from early youth to the business of verse-making. His perseverance equalled his ambition, as he left few forms of verse unattempted, though his happiest flights are those that involved the least prolonged labor. He was born in 1563 in Warwickshire, went to Oxford, and thence to London, where, in 1591, he published a book of religious poems, "The Harmony of the Church," which included a version of the Canticles. Except a few copies impounded by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the whole edition was condemned by law and destroyed. To this followed two volumes of love-songs and pastorals, and to these a historical epic entitled "Matilda." Like Daniel, his friend and occasional co-worker, he issued successive editions of a big poetical history, "The Barons' Wars," and, in 1597, "England's Heroical Epistles," containing some stirring passages, done in heroic couplets. The favor he enjoyed from Elizabeth was not continued by King James, whereupon the poet tried to find solace in a satire called, "The Owl," and a later one was, "The Man in the Moon." In 1605 Drayton issued a selection of his lyric and pastoral poems.

For a number of years he toiled at his strange task of rhyming his learned survey of England, introducing every object of antiquarian and topographical interest, with a strain of history through it all. Thirty books are filled with this famous "Poly-Olbion" (Very-Wealthy), into special portions of which local readers dip, but its ponderous Alexandrine rhymes are dreary in the extreme, despite many fine passages. In 1627 Drayton published another book of miscellanea, including "Nymphidia, the Court of Faery," his most poetical work, and the stirring "Ballad of Agincourt." He died in 1631. Few poets of his calibre have put so much solid learning and skilled workmanship into productions such as the "Poly-Olbion" as did Drayton. That poem is relied upon by historians as a safe authority upon many matters. But it is on his lighter creations of fancy that Drayton's fame rests.

THE BALLAD OF AGINCOURT.

FAIR stood the wind for France,
When we our sails advance,
Nor now to prove our chance
Longer will we tarry;
But putting to the main,
At Kaux, the mouth of Seine,
With all his martial train
Landed King Harry.

And, taking many a fort,
Furnished in warlike sort,
Marcheth towards Agincourt,
In happy hour,
(Skirmishing day by day
With those oppose his way)
Where the French General lay
With all his power.

Which, in his height of pride
King Henry to deride,
His ransom to provide
To the King sending;
Which he neglects the while,
As from a nation vile,
Yet with an angry smile
Their fall portending.

And, turning to his men,
Quoth our brave Henry then:
"Though they to one be ten
Be not amazèd!
Yet have we well begun;
Battles so bravely won
Have ever to the sun
By Fame been raisèd.

"And for myself,"—quoth he,—
"This my full rest shall be,
England ne'er mourn for me
Nor more esteem me;—
Victor I will remain,
Or on this earth lie slain:
Never shall she sustain
Loss to redeem me.

"Poictiers and Cressy tell,
When most their pride did swell,
Under our swords they fell:
No less our skill is
Than when our grandsire great,
Claiming the regal seat,
By many a warlike feat
Lopp'd the French lilies."

The Duke of York so dread
The eager vanward led;
With the main Henry sped
Amongst his henchmen;
Excester had the rear,
A braver man not there,—
O Lord! how hot they were
On the false Frenchmen!

They now to fight are gone:
Armor on armor shone,
Drum now to drum did groan—
    To hear was wonder;
That, with the cries they make,
The very earth did shake;
Trumpet to trumpet spake,—
    Thunder to thunder.

Well it thine age became,
O noble Erpingham!
Which didst the signal aim
    To our hid forces,
When from a meadow by,
Like a storm suddenly,
The English archery
    Stuck the French horses.

With Spanish yew so strong,
Arrows a cloth-yard long
That like to serpents stung,
    Piercing the weather,—
None from his fellow starts,
But, playing manly parts,
And like true English hearts
    Stuck close together.

When down their bows they threw,
And forth their bilboes drew,
And on the French they flew,
    Not one was tardy;
Arms from the shoulders sent,
Scalps to the teeth were rent,
Down the French peasants went,—
    Our men were hardy.

This while our noble king,
His broad sword brandishing,
Into the host did fling,
    As to o'erwhelm it,
And many a deep wound lent
His arm with blood besprent;
And many a cruel dent
    Bruiséd his helmet.

Glo'ster, that duke so good,
Next of the royal blood,
For famous England stood.
With his brave brother!
Clarence, in steel so bright,
Though but a maiden knight,
Yet in that furious fight
Scarce such another.

Warwick in blood did wade;
Oxford the foe invade,
And cruel slaughter made,
Still as they ran up;
Suffolk his axe did ply;
Beaumont and Willoughby
Bare them right doughtily,
Ferrers and Fanhope.

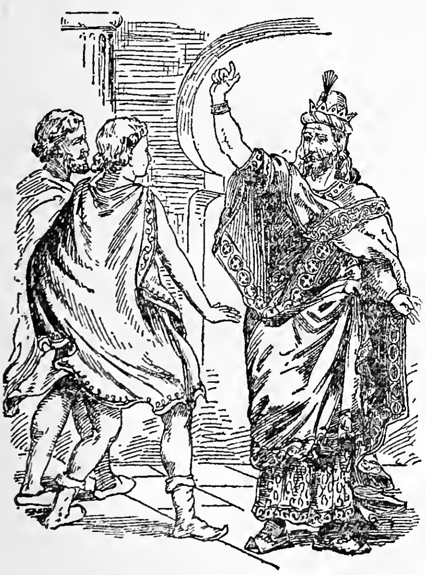
Upon St. Crispin's Day
Fought was this noble fray,
Which Fame did not delay
To England to carry.
O when shall Englishmen
With such acts fill a pen,
Or England breed again
Such a King Harry?

THOMAS DEKKER.

WHETHER 1570 was the year of Dekker's birth, or 1641 that of his death, is not quite known. Certain it is that in 1599 Dekker was engaged in touching up a dozen or more popular plays by various hands, besides having written "Orestes' Furies," "Truth's Supplication," and "The Shoemaker's Holiday." This latter, published in 1600, held and still holds its own by force of its photographic delineation of the London life of the day. The moral is allowed to look after itself. Dekker's ready pen found other avenues for its piquant jibes at sundry brother-poets besides that of comedy. There are poems and rhymes, with prose pieces such as "The Seven Deadly Sins of London" and the "Gull's Hornbook," which well sustain the lively sketchiness, with keen point and truth, for which he has been compared to Dickens, and with less force, to Lamb. It was for liberties taken in his "Shoemaker's Holiday" that Ben Jonson retorted in "The Poetaster," published a few months after the former, in which Dekker is pilloried as Crispinus. To this Dekker replied with "Satiro-Mastix, or, The Untrussing of the Humorous Poets," a satire on Jonson mainly, under the name of Young Horace, as his chief aim was to depict men's humors. With John Webster he wrote "Westward Ho!" and with Middleton "The Converted Courtesan," two strong plays, owing more of their strength than their charm to his aids, for none surpassed Dekker in wit, raciness, and the dainty lyrics, sprinkled through the plays. His great value, however, is that of giving us the faithfullest realization of life as it was in that brilliant time, so remote in its domestic and city-life aspect, though so near by the largeness of its historical and literary achievements.

FORTUNATUS REVIEWS THE WORLD.

FORTUNATUS first obtained from Fortune a purse that is inexhaustible, afterwards from the Soldan of Babylon a hat which at his wish transports him wherever he pleases. He returns to his home in Cyprus and tells his sons of his travels.



Fortunatus. Touch me not, boys, I am nothing but air; let none speak to me till you have marked me well. Am I as you are, or am I transformed?

Andelocia. Methinks, my father, you look as you did, only your face is withered.

Fort. Boys, be proud; your father hath the whole world in this compass. I am all felicity, up to the brims. In a minute am I come from Babylon; I have been this half hour in Famagosta.

And. How! in a minute, father? I see travelers must lie.

Fort. I have cut through the air like a falcon. I would have it seem strange to you. But 'tis true. I would not have you believe it neither. But 'tis miraculous and true. Desire to see you brought me to Cyprus. I'll leave you more gold, and go to visit more countries.

Ampedo. The frosty hand of age now nips your blood,
And strews her snowy flowers upon your head,
And gives you warning that within few years
Death needs must marry you: those short lines, minutes,
That dribble out your life, must needs be spent
In peace, not travel; rest in Cyprus then.
Could you survey ten worlds, yet you must die;
And bitter is the sweet that's reaped thereby.

And. Faith, father, what pleasure have you met by walking your stations?

Fort. What pleasure, boy? I have revelled with kings, danced with queens, dallied with ladies; worn strange attires; seen fantasticoes; conversed with humorists; been ravished with divine raptures of Doric, Lydian and Phrygian harmonies; I have spent the day in triumphs and the night in banqueting.

And. Oh, rare! this was heavenly. He that would not be an Arabian phœnix to burn in these sweet fires, let him live like an owl for the world to wonder at.

Amp. Why, brother, are not all these vanities?

Fort. Vanities! Ampedo, thy soul is made of lead, too dull, too ponderous, to mount up to the incomprehensible glory that travel lifts men to.

And. Sweeten mine ears, good father, with some more.

Fort. When in the warmth of mine own country's arms
We yawned like sluggards, when this small horizon
Imprisoned up my body, then mine eyes
Worshiped these clouds as brightest: but, my boys,
The glistering beams which do abroad appear
In other heavens, fire is not half so clear.
For still in all the regions I have seen,
I scorned to crowd among the muddy throng
Of the rank multitude, whose thickened breath
(Like to condensed fogs) do choke that beauty,
Which else would dwell in every kingdom's cheek.
No; I still boldly stepped into their courts:
For there to live 'tis rare, Oh, 'tis divine;
There shall you see faces angelical:

There shall you see troops of chaste goddesses,
Whose star-like eyes have power (might they still shine)
To make night day, and day more crystalline.
Near these you shall behold great heroes,
White-headed counsellors, and jovial spirits,
Standing like fiery cherubims to guard
The monarch, who in godlike glory sits
In midst of these, as if this deity
Had with a look created a new world,
The standers-by being the fair workmanship.
And. Oh, how my soul is rapt to a third heaven!
I'll travel sure, and live with none but kings.
Amp. But tell me, father, have you in all courts
Beheld such glory, so majestical,
In all perfection, no way blemished?
Fort. In some courts shall you see ambition
Sit, piecing Dædalus's old waxen wings;
But being clapped on, and they about to fly,
Even when their hopes are busied in the clouds,
They melt against the sun of majesty,
And down they tumble to destruction.
By travel, boys, I have seen all these things.
Fantastic compliment stalks up and down,
Tricked in outlandish feathers; all his words,
His looks, his oaths, are all ridiculous,
All apish, childish, and Italianate.

JOHN WEBSTER.

Of Webster's origin we know nothing, and very little of his life. He was probably a year or so younger than Fletcher (which would make his birth-year 1579), or about three and twenty when James I. came to the throne, and he had done some stage work two years before that. Whether he was the son of an established merchant-tailor, or had to take to the thimble and tape-measure for a living, is past knowing; this is how he is described on the title page of the book of words of the London city pageant for 1624, of which this literary tailor was author. He was then about forty-five, certainly no prentice hand at play-writing. Twelve years before this he had produced a remarkable tragedy, "The White Devil, or, Vittoria Corombona,'' one of the most powerful compositions of its class in all literature. The next few years yield an elegy, fancifully entitled, "A Monumental Columne Erected to the Loving Memory of Henry, Late Prince of Wales,'' a tragicomedy called, "The Devil's Law-Case,'' and miscellaneous work. Then, in 1623, appeared his master-piece, the tremendous tragedy of "The Duchess of Malfy'' (Italian, Amalfi). This alone places Webster close to Shakespeare on his highest plane, to whose "King Lear'' it is well compared in depth of pathos and power. "No poet,'' says one of the great dramatic poets of our century, "has ever so long and so successfully sustained at their utmost height and intensity the expressed emotions and the united effects of terror and pity. . . . This tragedy stands out among its compeers as one of the imperishable and ineradicable landmarks of literature.'' An interval of thirty years comes between the "Duchess of Malfy,'' and the tragedy of "Appius and Virginia,'' which was published in 1654, though doubtless performed much earlier. This little-read play has pages that are rich enough in Elizabethan gems to make enviable reputations. Webster looms out of the brilliant past a solitary figure, dark of countenance and mysterious in his flittings among the shadows cast by lesser forms who throng the foreground. He comes to the front at intervals, speaks in tones that roll like thunder among the hills, and then he disappears in the gloom and we know no more, but the echoes reverberate and the sense of awe remains. Speaking of the great scene in "The Duchess of Malfy,'' Lamb does not hesitate to award the extreme of praise to the sombre genius that could invest a terrible theme in language of such poetic beauty. He says, "To move a horror skillfully, to touch a soul to the quick, to lay upon fear as much as it can bear, to wean and weary a life till it is ready to drop, and then step in with mortal instruments to take its last forfeit—this only a Webster can do. Writers of an inferior genius may 'upon horror's head horrors accumulate,' but they cannot do this.''

DEATH OF THE DUCHESS OF MALFY.

BY her voluntary marriage with her steward the Duchess has enraged her brother, who tortures her mind by causing her to believe that waxen images of her husband and children are their corpses. This failing to make her insane, he sends men to her with her coffin and ropes, with which they strangle the wretched victim.

Duchess. Is he mad too?

Bosola. I am come to make thy tomb.

Duch. Ha! my tomb?
Thou speak'st as if I lay upon my death-bed,
Gasping for breath: Dost thou perceive me sick?

Bos. Yes, and the more dangerously, since thy sickness is insensible.

Duch. Thou art not mad sure: dost know me?

Bos. Yes.

Duch. Who am I?

Bos. Thou art a box of wormseed; at best but a salvatory of green mummy. What's this flesh? a little crudded milk, fantastical puff-paste. Our bodies are weaker than those paper-prisons boys use to keep flies in, more contemptible; since ours is to preserve earth-worms. Didst thou ever see a lark in a cage? Such is the soul in the body; this world is like her little turf of grass; and the heavens o'er our heads, like her looking-glass, only give us a miserable knowledge of the small compass of our prison.

Duch. Am not I thy duchess?

Bos. Thou art some great woman, sure, for riot begins to sit on thy forehead (clad in gray hairs) twenty years sooner than on a merry milkmaid's. Thou sleepest worse, than if a mouse should be forced to take up her lodging in a cat's ear: a little infant that breeds its teeth, should it lie with thee, would cry out, as if thou wert the more unquiet bedfellow.

Duch. I am Duchess of Malfy still.

Bos. That makes thy sleeps so broken.
Glories, like glow-worms, afar off shine bright;
But, looked to near, have neither heat nor light.

Duch. Thou art very plain.

Bos. My trade is to flatter the dead, not the living.
I am a tomb-maker.

Duch. And thou comest to make my tomb?

Bos. Yes.

Duch. Let me be a little merry.
Of what stuff wilt thou make it?

Bos. Nay, resolve me first; of what fashion?

Duch. Why, do we grow fantastical in our death-bed?
Do we affect fashion in the grave?

Bos. Most ambitiously. Princes' images on their tombs do not lie as they were wont, seeming to pray up to heaven: but with their hands under their cheeks (as if they died of the toothache): they are not carved with their eyes fixed upon the stars; but, as their minds were wholly bent upon the world, the self-same way they seem to turn their faces.

Duch. Let me know fully, therefore, the effect
Of this thy dismal preparation,
This talk, fit for a charnel.

Bos. Now I shall. [*A coffin, cords, and a bell produced.*
Here is a present from your princely brothers;
And may it arrive welcome, for it brings
Last benefit, last sorrow.

Duch. Let me see it.
I have so much obedience in my blood,
I wish it in their veins to do them good.

Bos. This is your last presence chamber

Cariola. O my sweet lady.

Duch. Peace, it affrights not me.

Bos. I am the common bellman,
That usually is sent to condemned persons
The night before they suffer.

Duch. Even now thou said'st
Thou wast a tomb-maker.

Bos. 'Twas to bring you
By degrees to mortification; Listen.

Dirge.

Hark, now every thing is still;
This screech-owl, and the whistle shrill,
Call upon our dame aloud,
And bid her quickly don her shroud.
Much you had of land and rent;
Your length in clay's now competent.
A long war disturbed your mind;
Here your perfect peace is signed.

Of what is 't fools make such vain keeping?
Sin, their conception; their birth, weeping:
Their life, a general mist of error,
Their death, a hideous storm of terror.
Strew your hair with powders sweet,
Don clean linen, bathe your feet:
And (the foul fiend more to check),
A crucifix let bless your neck.
'Tis now full tide 'tween night and day;
End your groan and come away.

Car. Hence, villains, tyrants, murderers; alas!
What will you do with my lady? Call for help.
Duch. To whom? to our next neighbors? They are mad folks.
Farewell, Cariola,
I pray thee look thou givest my little boy
Some syrup for his cold; and let the girl
Say her prayers ere she sleep.—Now what you please;
What death?
Bos. Strangling. Here are your executioners.
Duch. I forgive them.
The apoplexy, catarrh, or cough o' the lungs,
Would do as much as they do.
Bos. Doth not death fright you?
Duch. Who would be afraid on 't,
Knowing to meet such excellent company
In the other world.
Bos. Yet methinks,
The manner of your death should much afflict you:
This cord should terrify you.
Duch. Not a whit.
What would it pleasure me to have my throat cut
With diamonds, or to be smothered
With cassia? or to be shot to death with pearls?
I know death hath ten thousand several doors
For men to take their exits: and 'tis found
They go on such strange geometrical hinges,
You may open them both ways: any way (for heaven sake),
So I were out of your whispering: tell my brothers
That I perceive death (now I'm well awake)
Best gift is they can give or I can take.
I would fain put off my last woman's fault;

I'd not be tedious to you.
Pull, and pull strongly, for your able strength
Must pull down heaven upon me.
Yet stay, heaven gates are not so highly arched
As princes' palaces: they that enter there
Must go upon their knees. Come, violent death,
Serve for mandragora to make me sleep.
Go tell my brothers, when I am laid out,
They then may feed in quiet. [*They strangle her, kneeling.*]

[*Ferdinand enters.*]

Ferdinand. Is she dead?
Bos. She is what you would have her
Fix your eyes here.
Ferd. Constantly.
Bos. Do you not weep?
Other sins only speak; murder shrieks out,
The element of water moistens the earth,
But blood flies upwards and bedews the heavens.
Ferd. Cover her face: mine eyes dazzle: she died young.
Bos. I think not so: her infelicity
Seemed to have years too many.
Ferd. She and I were twins:
And should I die this instant, I had lived
Her time to a minute.

CYRIL TOURNEUR.

Of Tourneur, certainly one of the first dramatic poets, ancient or modern, nothing is known but his un-English name and the dates of such of his works as have survived him. A poem or two and an elegy on the death of King James's son are all we have of his writings beside the two mighty tragedies that lift him among the great masters of moving poetry. The "Atheist's Tragedy" was published in 1607 and the "Revenger's Tragedy" in 1611. If Tourneur contemplated the portrayal of another Hamlet, it was a character original to himself, a Hamlet of deeper passion and more practical purpose, so that Vindice, the crafty but honor-loving hero of the "Revenger's Tragedy," stands a conspicuous figure on the same plane as the Prince of Denmark. The plots are fiercer than our tastes allow; they play with the passions and deal violently with the elemental forces which weaker artists handle more shamefacedly. No desperate resource of diabolical cunning is left untried on man or woman, young or mature, in the grim office of dissecting human nature to the marrow. Tourneur has justified his genius in two of the loftiest tragic poems in all literature. Crudities abound, and excessive strength frequently mars the simple natural force as well as the poetic beauty of not a few pages. A grim humor, instinct with scathing satire, flavors even the grander passages without endangering their dignity.

THUNDER.

In the tragedy of "The Atheist" D'Amville and his minion Borachio make merry as they recount the details of their murder of the former's brother. The Atheist is ridiculing the belief that heaven has any influence or cognizance of men's deeds, because it lent the cover of darkness to aid this crime. As he speaks there is a burst of thunder and lightning, at which Borachio starts.

D'Amville. What! dost start at thunder? Credit my belief, 'tis a mere effect of nature, an exhalation hot and dry, involved within a watery vapor in the middle region of the air, whose coldness congealing that thick moisture to a cloud, the angry exhalation shut within a prison of contrary quality strives to be free; and with the violent eruption through the grossness of that cloud makes this noise we hear.

Borachio. 'Tis a fearful noise!

D'Amville. 'Tis a brave noise; and, methinks, graces our accomplished project as a peal of ordnance does a triumph. It speaks encouragement. Now nature shows thee how it favored our performance to forbear this noise when we set forth, because it should not terrify my brother's going home, which would have dashed our purpose; to forbear this lightning in our passage, lest it should have warned him of the pitfall. Then, propitious nature winked at our proceedings; now, it doth express how that forbearance favored our success.

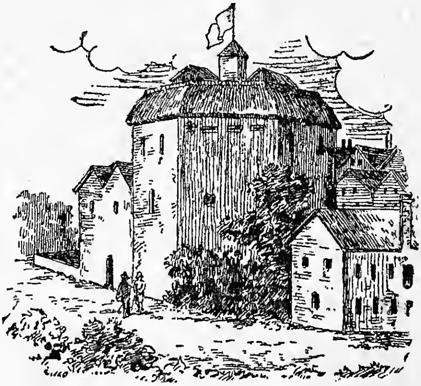
THE REVENGER'S TRAGEDY.

In this tragedy Vindici disguises himself as an emissary from the duke's son, and attempts by every suasion to induce his own sister to sacrifice her honor for its worldly recompense. She repulses him indignantly, greatly to his joy. Next he essays to win their mother's favor by promise of money, so that she shall bring pressure to bear on the girl. The temptation is too much for her and she consents. Vindici and his brother Hippolito thereafter threaten their mother with death for her readiness to dishonor her daughter.

Vindici. O thou for whom no name is bad enough!
Mother. What mean my sons? what, will you murder me?
Vin. Wicked unnatural parent!
Hippolito. Fiend of women!
Moth. Oh! are sons turned monsters? help!
Vin. In vain.
Moth. Are you so barbarous to set iron nipples
Upon the breast that gave you suck?
Vin. That breast
Is turned to quarled poison.
Moth. Cut not your days for 't. Am not I your mother?
Vin. Thou dost usurp that title now by fraud,
For in that shell of mother breeds a bawd.
Moth. A bawd! O name far loathsomer than hell!
Hip. It should be so, knew'st thou thy office well.
Moth. I hate it.
Vin. Ah, is it possible, you powers on high,
That women should dissemble when they die?
Moth. Dissemble!
Vin. Did not the duke's son direct
A fellow of the world's condition hither,
That did corrupt all that was good in thee?
Made thee uncivilly forget thyself,
And work our sister to his purpose?
Moth. Who, I?
That had been monstrous. I defy that man
For any such intent. None lives so pure,
But shall be soiled with slander.
Good son, believe it not.
Vin. Oh, I'm in doubt
Whether I am myself or no—
Stay, let me look again upon this face,
Who shall be saved when mothers have no grace?
[*Resumes his disguise.*
Hip. 'Twould make one half despair.
Vin. I was the man.
Defy me now, let's see, do 't modestly.

Moth. Oh, hell unto my soul!
Vin. In that disguise, I, sent from the duke's son,
Tried you, and found you base metal,
As any villain might have done.
Moth. O no,
No tongue but yours could have bewitched me so,
Vin. O nimble in damnation, quick in turn!
There is no devil could strike fire so soon.
I am confuted in a word.
Moth. O sons,
Forgive me, to myself I'll prove more true;
You that should honor me, I kneel to you.
Vin. A mother to give aim to her own daughter!
Hip. True, brother; how far beyond nature 'tis,
Though many mothers do it!
Vin. Nay, and you draw tears once, go you to bed.
Wet will make iron blush and change to red.
Brother, it rains, 'twill spoil your dagger, house it.
Hip. 'Tis done.
Vin. I' faith 'tis a sweet shower, it does much good.
The fruitful grounds and meadows of her soul
Have been long dry: pour down, thou blessed dew!
Rise, mother; troth, this shower has made you higher.
Moth. Oh, you heavens!
Take this infectious spot out of my soul;
I'll rinse it in seven waters of mine eyes.
Make my tears salt enough to taste of grace.
To weep is to our sex naturally given;
But to weep truly, that's a gift from Heaven.
Vin. Nay, I'll kiss you now. Kiss her, brother:
Let's marry her to our souls, wherein's no lust,
And honorably love her.
Hip. Let it be.
Vin. For honest women are so seld and rare,
'Tis good to cherish those poor few that are.
O you of easy wax! do but imagine,
Now the disease has left you, how leprously
That office would have clung unto your forehead!
All mothers that had any graceful hue,
Would have worn masks to hide their face at you.
It would have grown to this, at your foul name
Green-colored maids would have turned red with shame.

Hip. And then our sister, full of hire and baseness—
Vin. There had been boiling lead again!
The duke's son's great concubine!
A drab of state, a cloth-o'-silver slut,
To have her train borne up, and her soul trail in the dirt.
Hip. To be great, miserable; to be rich, eternally wretched.
Vin. O common madness!
Ask but the thriving'st harlot in cold blood,
She'd give the world to make her honor good.
Perhaps you'll say, but only to the duke's son
In private; why, she first begins with one
Who afterwards to thousands proves a whore:
Break ice in one place, it will crack in more.
Moth. Most certainly applied.
Hip. O brother, you forget our business.
Vin. And well remembered; joy 's a subtle elf;
I think man 's happiest when he forgets himself.
Farewell, once dry, now holy-watered mead;
Our hearts wear feathers, that before wore lead.
Moth. I'll give you this, that one I never knew
Plead better for and 'gainst the devil than you.
Vin. You make me proud on 't.
Hip. Commend us in all virtue to our sister.
Vin. Ay, for the love of heaven, to that true maid.
Moth. With my best words.
Vin. Why, that was motherly said.



THE GLOBE THEATRE.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

Two young men of the Elizabethan dramatic group found themselves united by a rare sympathy of ideal friendship and a like genius, which endured till death. The twinship of Beaumont and Fletcher was that of soul as well as intellect. Their work is a perfect harmony of diverse powers, and it is as unnecessary as it is difficult to apportion its beauties to one or the other of its gifted creators.

John Fletcher was born in 1579, and Francis Beaumont in 1584, or 1585. Fletcher's father ultimately became Bishop of London, but the youth had a hard struggle to live, being orphaned at seventeen. He had been through Cambridge, and thence to London, with the usual experience of a hack writer for the stage. Beaumont's father was on the bench of the common pleas, with the honors of knighthood. He left Oxford without graduating, entered the Inner Temple bar, and took to paraphrasing tales from Ovid. Very soon this pair of literary adventurers embarked upon their communistic career, sharing bed and board and clothes, as they shared in their toil and ambition. They were playwrights from necessity and poets by choice. Whether they had produced an earlier play than "Philaster; or, Love Lies a-Bleeding," is not known. It was their first success, and was performed in 1609, if not the year before; but they had both enjoyed the distinction of prefixing poems of their own to the published version of Jonson's comedy "Volpone," in 1607, when Fletcher was twenty-eight and Beaumont only twenty-two. Within eight years Beaumont died, only a few weeks before the death of Shakespeare. Their principal joint works were written between 1607 and 1612, as Beaumont wrote no more for the stage after his marriage in 1613. The best collected edition of the plays "by Beaumont and Fletcher" did not appear until thirty-one years after Beaumont's death and twenty-two years after Fletcher's, and the latter was sole author of many which bore their joint names.

Of their best plays, accepted as of their authorship, these five rank highest: "Philaster," "A King no King," "The

Maid's Tragedy," "The Scornful Lady," and "Four Plays in One." It is possible that others had some share in the "Cupid's Revenge," the "Coxcomb," and the "Captain." There are no fewer than fifty-six dramas in all in which traces, at least, of both writers are found, but chiefly of Fletcher. The "Woman Hater," and the "Masque of the Inner Temple," and "The Honest Man's Fortune," are regarded as Beaumont's work. Fletcher collaborated with Shakespeare in "The Two Noble Kinsmen." In loftiness of imagination, purity of style and strength, Beaumont surpassed the more exuberant and lighter touch of his co-worker. Their masterpieces are "Philaster" and "The Maid's Tragedy," splendid examples of poetical romance at its highest. Where Beaumont excelled in pathos, the elder sparkled in wit and drollery; yet the former produced the brilliant burlesque on the romance of chivalry (ridiculed a few years earlier by Cervantes in his "Don Quixote"), entitled the "Knight of the Burning Pestle." Fletcher's greatest comedy, perhaps his chief work, is "Rule a Wife and Have a Wife;" and not much inferior in merit, though belonging to another order of mixed comedy and romance, are "The Little French Lawyer," "The Custom of the Country," "The Wild-goose Chase," and "The Noble Gentleman,"—the last being pure extravaganza. The poetical element which informs the whole range of Beaumont and Fletcher's dramatic pieces has already been remarked upon; but, outside the plays proper, both are entitled to rank with the foremost poets of even their golden age. Though cast in dramatic form, Fletcher's famous "Faithful Shepherdess" is a lyrical gem of purest ray. His touch here is matched with the sweetest notes of Milton, whose "Comus" owes much to this first model.

Fletcher's death occurred in 1625. Where both had the gift it is ungracious to seek to draw comparisons of merit. Great as each was in the literary art, together they compounded a body of dramatic and lyric poetry which Shakespeare need not have hesitated to own. The exquisite charm of their lighter verse is not surpassed, in all that gives immortality to human work, by the more impressive volume of their writings for the theatre.

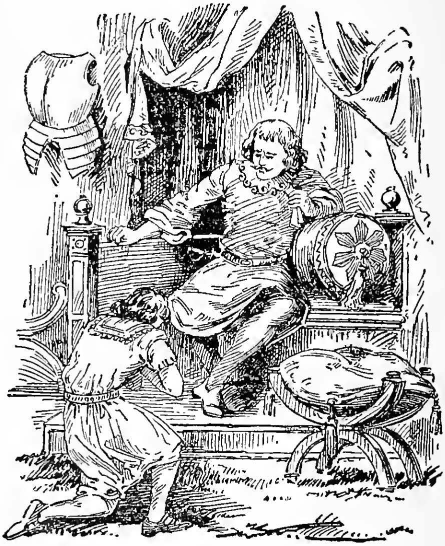
PHILASTER'S JEALOUSY.

IN the tragi-comedy "Philaster, or Love Lies a-Bleeding," Philaster finds the boy Bellario in the forest, and takes him into his service. Afterwards he gives the boy as servant to the princess Arethusa, with whom he is in love. Bellario serves both faithfully, but the prince becomes jealous. Eventually it turns out that the boy is a girl who had disguised herself to be near Philaster, whom she had loved hopelessly.

Bellario. Health to you, my lord;
The princess doth commend her love, her life
And this unto you.
Philaster. O Bellario,
Now I perceive she loves me, she does show it
In loving thee, my boy; she has made thee brave.
Bell. My lord, she has attired me past my wish,
Past my desert, more fit for her attendant,
Though far unfit for me who do attend.
Phi. Thou art grown courtly, boy. O let all women
That love black deeds learn to dissemble here.
Here by this paper she does write to me
As if her heart were mines of adamant
To all the world besides, but unto me
A maiden snow that melted with my looks.
Tell me, my boy, how doth the princess use thee?
For I shall guess her love to me by that.
Bell. Scarce like her servant, but as if I were
Something allied to her, or had preserved
Her life three times by my fidelity;
As mothers fond do use their only sons;
As I'd use one that's left unto my trust,
For whom my life should pay if he met harm,
So does she use me.
Phi. Why this is wondrous well:
But what kind language does she feed thee with?
Bell. Why, she does tell me, she will trust my youth
With all her loving secrets, and does call me
Her pretty servant, bids me weep no more
For leaving you; she'll see my services
Regarded: and such words of that soft strain,

That I am nearer weeping when she ends
Than ere she spake.
Phi. This is much better still.
Bell. Are you ill, my lord?
Phi. Ill? No, Bellario.
Bell. Methinks your words
Fall not from off your tongue so evenly,
Nor is there in your looks that quietness,
That I was wont to see.
Phi. Thou art deceived, boy.—And she strokes thy head?
Bell. Yes.
Phi. And she does clap thy cheeks?
Bell. She does, my lord.
Phi. And she does kiss thee, boy, ha?
Bell. How, my lord?
Phi. She kisses thee?
Bell. Not so, my lord.
Phi. Come, come, I know she does.
Bell. No, by my life.
Ay, now I see why my disturbed thoughts
Were so perplexed when first I went to her;
My heart held augury. You are abused,
Some villain has abused you; I do see
Whereto you tend; fall rocks upon his head,
That put this to you; 'tis some subtle train
To bring that noble frame of yours to naught.
Phi. Thou think'st I will be angry with thee. Come,
Thou shall know all my drift. I hate her more
Than I love happiness, and placed thee there
To pry with narrow eyes into her deeds.
Hast thou discovered? is she fallen to lust,
As I would wish her? Speak some comfort to me.
Bell. My lord, you did mistake the boy you sent:
Had she a sin that way, hid from the world,
I would not aid
Her base desires; but what I came to know
As servant to her, I would not reveal,
To make my life last ages.
Phi. O my heart!
This is a salve worse than the main disease.
Tell me thy thoughts; for I will know the least
That dwells within thee, or will rip thy heart

To know it; I will see thy thoughts as plain
As I do know thy face.
Bell. Why, so you do.
She is (for aught I know), by all the gods,
As chaste as ice; but were she foul as hell,
And I did know it, thus; the breath of kings,
The points of swords, tortures, nor bulls of brass,
Should draw it from me.
Phi. Then it is no time
To dally with thee; I will take thy life,
For I do hate thee; I could curse thee now.
Bell. If you do hate, you could not curse me worse;
The gods have not a punishment in store
Greater for me than is your hate.
Phi. Fie, fie,
So young and so dissembling! fearest thou not death?
Can boys contemn that?
Bell. Oh, what boy is he
Can be content to live to be a man,
That sees the best of men thus passionate,
Thus without reason?
Phi. Oh, but thou dost not know what 'tis to die.



Bell. Yes, I do know, my lord!
'Tis less than to be born; a lasting sleep;
A quiet resting from all jealousy;
A thing we all pursue; I know besides
It is but giving over of a game
That must be lost.
Phi. But there are pains, false boy,
For perjured souls; think but on these, and then
Thy heart will melt, and thou wilt utter all.
Bell. May they fall all upon me whilst I live,
If I be perjured, or have ever thought

Of that you charge me with; if I be false,
Send me to suffer in those punishments
You speak of; kill me.
Phi. Oh, what should I do?
Why, who can but believe him? He does swear
So earnestly, that if it were not true,
The gods would not endure him. Rise, Bellario;
Thy protestations are so deep, and thou
Dost look so truly when thou utter'st them,
That though I know them false, as were my hopes,
I cannot urge thee further; but thou wert
To blame to injure me, for I must love
Thy honest looks, and take no revenge upon
Thy tender youth: a love from me to thee
Is firm whate'er thou dost: it troubles me
That I have called the blood out of thy cheeks,
That did so well become thee: but, good boy,
Let me not see thee more; something is done
That will distract me, that will make me mad,
If I behold thee; if thou tender'st me,
Let me not see thee.
Bell. I will fly as far
As there is morning, ere I give distaste
To that most honored mind. But through these tears,
Shed at my hopeless parting, I can see
A world of treason practised upon you,
And her, and me. Farewell for evermore;
If you shall hear that sorrow struck me dead,
And after find me loyal, let there be
A tear shed from you in my memory,
And I shall rest at peace.

THE HOME-MADE DUKE.

IN Beaumont and Fletcher's play, "The Noble Gentleman," an intriguing wife and her companions persuade Monsieur Mount-Marine that the king has conferred many favors on him and made him a duke. Their purpose is to keep him in the city that they may spend his money. Afterwards, in further prosecution of the same design, they pretend to have been ordered to unmake the poor dupe.

SCENE—*A room in the house of Marine.*

Longueville. Where's Monsieur Mount-Marine?
Gentleman. Why, there he stands; will ye aught with him?

Long. Yes.
Good-day, Monsieur Marine!
Marine. Good-day to you.
Long. His majesty doth recommend himself
Most kindly to you, sir, and hath, by me,
Sent you this favor: kneel down; rise a knight!
Mar. I thank his majesty!
Long. And he doth further
Request you not to leave the court so soon;
For though your former merits have been slighted,
After this time there shall no office fall
Worthy your spirit (as he doth confess
There's none so great) but you shall surely have it.
Gent. (*aside to Marine*). Do you hear? If you yield yet, you are an ass.
Mar. I'll show my service to his majesty
In greater things than these; but for this small one
I must entreat his highness to excuse me.
Long. I'll bear your knightly words unto the king,
And bring his princely answer back again. [*Exit.*
Gent. Well said! Be resolute a while; I know
There is a tide of honors coming on;
I warrant you! [*Enter Beaufort.*
Beaufort. Where is this new-made knight?
Mar. Here, sir.
Beau. Let me enfold you in my arms,
Then call you lord! the king will have it so:
Who doth entreat your lordship to remember
His message sent to you by Longueville.
Gent. If you be dirty, and dare not mount aloft,
You may yield now; I know what I would do.
Mar. Peace! I will fit him.—Tell his majesty
I am a subject, and I do confess
I serve a gracious prince, that thus hath heaped
Honors on me without desert; but yet
As for the message, business urgeth me,
I must begone, and he must pardon me,
Were he ten thousand kings and emperors.
Beau. I'll tell him so.
Gent. (*aside*). Why, this was like yourself!
Beau. As he hath wrought him, 'tis the finest fellow
That e'er was Christmas-lord! he carries it

So truly to the life, as though he were
One of the plot to gull himself. [*Exit.*
Gent. Why, so!
You sent the wisest and the shrewdest answer
Unto the king, I swear, my honored friend,
That ever any subject sent his liege.
Mar. Nay, now I know I have him on the hip,
I'll follow it. [*Enter Longueville.*
Long. My honorable lord!
Give me your noble hand, right courteous peer,
And from henceforward be a courtly earl;
The king so wills, and subjects must obey:
Only he doth desire you to consider
Of his request.
Gent. Why, faith, you are well, my lord;
Yield to him.
Mar. Yield? Why, 'twas my plot—
Gent. Nay,
'Twas your wife's plot.
Mar. To get preferment by it.
And thinks he now to pop me in the mouth
But with an earldom? I'll be one step higher.
Gent. (*aside*). It is the finest lord! I am afraid anon
He will stand upon't to share the kingdom with him.
[*Enter Beaufort.*
Beau. Where's this courtly earl?
His majesty commends his love unto you,
And will you but now grant to his request,
He bids you be a duke, and choose of whence.
Gent. Why, if you yield not now, you are undone;
What can you wish to have more, but the kingdom?
Mar. So please his majesty, I would be duke
Of Burgundy, because I like the place.
Beau. I know the king is pleased.
Mar. Then will I stay,
And kiss his highness' hand.
Beau. His majesty
Will be a glad man when he hears it.
Long. (*aside to the Gent.*). But how shall we keep this from the world's ear,
That some one tell him not, he is no duke?
Gent. We'll think of that anon.—Why, gentlemen,

Is this a gracious habit for a duke?
Each gentle body set a finger to,
To pluck the clouds of these his riding weeds
From off the orient sun, off his best clothes;
I'll pluck one boot and spur off. [*They pluck him.*
Long. I another.
Beau. I'll pluck his jerkin off.
Gent. Sit down, my lord.—
Both his spurs off at once, good Longueville!
And, Beaufort, take that scarf off, and that hat.
Now set your gracious foot to this of mine;
One pluck will do it; so! Off with the other!
Long. Lo, thus your servant Longueville doth pluck
The trophy of your former gentry off.
Off with his jerkin, Beaufort!
Gent. Didst thou never see
A nimble tailor stand so in his stockings,
Whilst some friend helped to pluck his jerkin off,
To dance a jig? [*Enter Jaques.*
Long. Here's his man Jaques come,
Booted and ready still.
Jaques. My mistress stays.
Why, how now, sir? What does your worship mean,
To pluck your grave and thrifty habit off?
Mar. My slippers, Jaques!
Long. O thou mighty duke!
Pardon this man, that thus hath trespassed,
In ignorance.
Mar. I pardon him.
Long. Jaques!
His grace's slippers!
Jaques. Why, what's the matter?
Long. Footman, he's a duke:
The king hath raised him above all his land. [*Enter Lady.*
Gent. See, see my mistress!
Long. (*aside*). Let's observe their greeting
Lady. Unto your will, as every good wife ought,
I have turned all my thoughts, and now am ready.
Mar. O wife, I am not worthy to kiss
The least of all thy toes, much less thy thumb,
Which yet I would be bold with! All thy counsel
Hath been to me angelical; but mine

To thee hath been most dirty, like my mind.
Dear duchess, I must stay.
Lady. What! are you mad,
To make me dress and undress, turn and wind me,
Because you find me pliant? Said I not
The whole world should not alter me, if once
I were resolved? and now you call me duchess:
Why, what's the matter?
Mar. Lo! a knight doth kneel.
Lady. A knight?
Mar. A lord.
Lady. A fool.
Mar. I say doth kneel
An earl, a duke.
Long. In drawers.
Beau. Without shoes.
Lady. Sure you are lunatic!
Gent. No, honored duchess
If you dare but believe your servant's truth,
I know he is a duke.
Lady. Your grace's pardon. . . . .
Long. The choicest fortunes wait upon our duke!
Gent. And give him all content and happiness!
Beau. Let his great name live to the end of time!
Mar. We thank you, and are pleased to give you notice
We shall at fitter times wait on your loves;
Till when, be near us.
Long. May it please your grace
To see the city? 't will be to the minds
And much contentment of the doubtful people.
Mar. I am determined so. Till my return,
I leave my honored duchess to her chamber.
Be careful of your health! I pray you be so.
Gent. Your grace shall suffer us, your humble servants,
To give attendance, fit so great a person,
Upon your body?
Mar. I am pleased so.
Long. (*aside*). Away, good Beaufort; raise a guard sufficient
To keep him from the reach of tongues; be quick!
And, do you hear? remember how the streets
Must be disposed for cries and salutations—
Your grace determines not to see the king?

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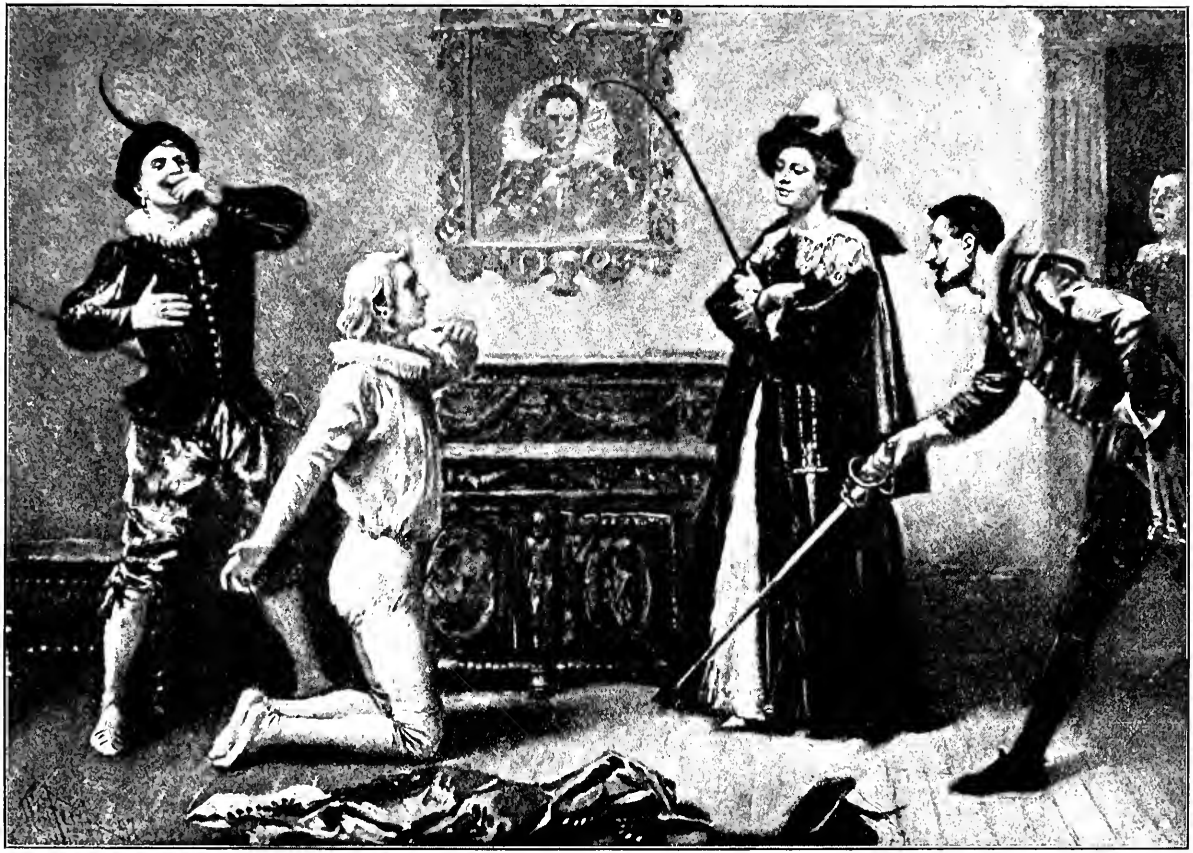
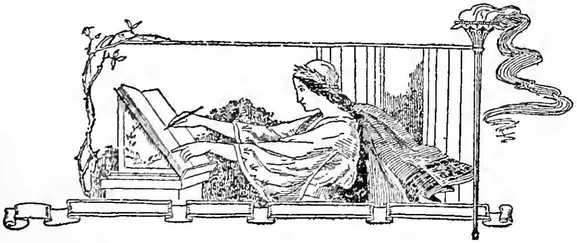


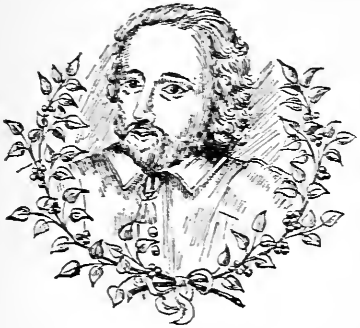
J. L. G. FERRIS, PINX

THE HOME-MADE DUKE

Mar. Not yet; I shall be be ready ten days hence
To kiss his highness' hand, and give him thanks,
As it is fit I should, for his great bounty.
Set forward, gentlemen!
Groom. Room for the duke there! [*They issue forth.*
Room there afore; sound! Room, and keep your places,
And you may see enough; keep your places!
Long. These people are too far unmannered, thus
To stop your grace's way with multitudes.
Mar. Rebuke them not, good monsieur. 'Tis their loves,
Which I will answer, if it please my stars
To spare me life and health.
2 *Gent.* God bless your grace!
Mar. And you, with all my heart.
1 *Gent.* Now Heaven preserve you!
Mar. I thank you too.
2 *Gent.* Now Heaven save your grace!
Mar. I thank you all.
Beau. On there before!
Mar. Stand, gentlemen!
Stay yet a while; I'm minded to impart
My love to these good people, and my friends,
Whose love and prayers for my greatness
Are equal in abundance. Note me well,
And with my words my heart; for as the tree——
Long. Your grace had best beware: 't will be informed
Your greatness with the people.
Mar. I had more,
My honest and ingenuous people: but
The weight of business hath prevented me;
I am called from you; but this tree I speak of
Shall bring forth fruit, I hope, to your content;
And so, I share my bowels amongst you all.
All. A noble duke! a very noble duke!



PHILIP MASSINGER.



PHILIP MASSINGER was born in 1584, son of a squire to the Earl of Pembroke, educated in Oxford. Between his leaving college in his twenty-second year and having a comedy acted at court, when he was thirty-seven, we know nothing of his doings, except his borrowing five pounds for himself and others from Henslowe, the theatrical manager, whom, he tells us, "I have ever found a true, loving friend."

Massinger is a striking instance of the not uncommon inability of genius to make sure of its daily bread and butter. Allowing for many drawbacks, he comes next to Shakespeare, among all his contemporaries, in the art of working a plot with consummate mastery. His plays were not few; they were penned in the rich English of the time, and are full of strong interest; yet they did not place him beyond want. No serious reproach attaches to his conduct. If he had been a ne'er-do-weel the cautious Henslowe would not have stood friend to him so constantly. Much of his work was in association with others, notably with Fletcher, and it is further evidence of good character that the friendship between these two warranted the line in Sir Aston Cokain's epitaph on Massinger, which runs, "Plays they did write together; were great friends." Those he produced himself were less likely to win popularity in performance. He preferred elaborating some absorbing trait of character to contriving intricate situations that should amuse the average spectator. To this main passion all else was subordinated. They are dramas to be read rather than witnessed. Their thrilling interest compels a continued reading, and at the end we feel we have been mastered by unwonted power. The well known "A New Way to Pay Old Debts" can boast of being the most popular play still holding the stage, written by any Elizabethan other than Shakespeare. The character of Sir Giles Overreach has been a favorite part with generations of great actors, and is as true to nature now as ever.

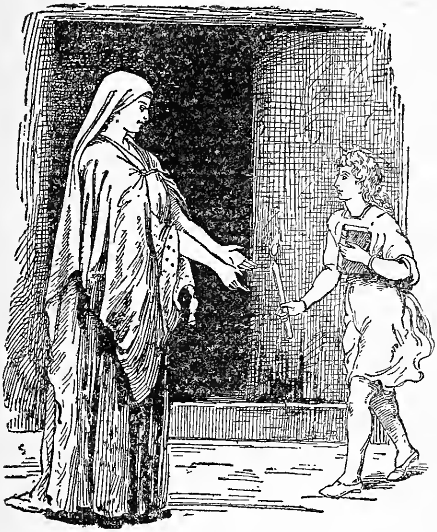
A remarkably strong tragedy is "The Duke of Milan," produced in 1623. Its interest is historical and romantic, with scenes of profound pathos and dialogue that rise to true eloquence. Massinger's own preference was for his "Roman Actor," which is a study of the tyrant Domitian. Here he gave free play to his satiric vein in exposing the seamy side of politics, of despotic rule and sycophant courtiers, working up to a stirring picture of victorious villainy, ultimately avenged in blood. Other favorite works are "The Fatal Dowry," in writing which he had the aid of Field, one of his two companions on the borrowing expedition; "The Bondman," "The Unnatural Combat," and the comedies, "Parliament of Love" and "The City Madam."

Three plays form the basis for supposing that Massinger espoused the unpopular Catholic faith, "The Virgin Martyr," in which he was assisted by Dekker; the "Renegado," and the "Maid of Honour." The first named has for theme a martyrdom under the Diocletian persecution, but the piece is little else than one of the defunct miracle plays, with the coarse features retained and realistic tortures introduced. The other two pieces turn upon the heroic conduct of a Jesuit priest who converts infidels, and a lady who takes the veil and gives her all to the church. Though the Gunpowder Plot had inflamed the populace against everything Catholic, Massinger's genius braved its censures and won its approval for his spectacular pleas for impartial judgment. He anticipated the inevitable reaction to a tolerant spirit, and so sought fortune. He died in 1640, aged fifty-six, and was buried near Fletcher, in St. Saviour's Church, as a "stranger" in the parish.

A MIDNIGHT SCENE.

(From "The Virgin Martyr.")

Angelo, an Angel, attends Dorothea as a Page.



Dorothea. My book and taper.
Angelo. Here, most holy mistress.
Dor. Thy voice sends forth such music, that I never
Was ravish'd with a more celestial sound.
Were every servant in the world like thee,
So full of goodness, angels would come down
To dwell with us: thy name is Angelo,
And like that name thou art. Get thee to rest;
Thy youth with too much watching is oppressed.
Ang. No, my dear lady. I could weary stars,
And force the wakeful moon to lose her eyes,
By my late watching, but to wait on you.
When at your prayers you kneel before the altar,
Methinks I'm singing with some choir in heaven,
So blest I hold me in your company.
Therefore, my most loved mistress, do not bid
Your boy, so serviceable, to get hence;
For then you break his heart.
Dor. Be nigh me still, then.
In golden letters down I'll set that day
Which gave thee to me. Little did I hope
To meet such worlds of comfort in thyself,
This little, pretty body, when I, coming
Forth of the temple, heard my beggar-boy,
My sweet-faced, godly beggar-boy, crave an alms,
Which with glad hand I gave, with lucky hand;

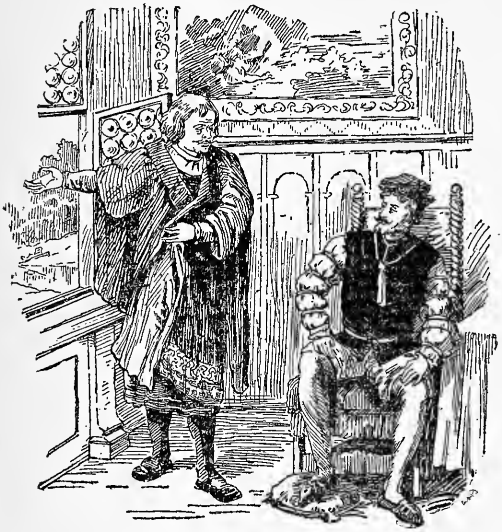
And when I took thee home, my most chaste bosom
Methought, was filled with no hot wanton fire,
But with a holy flame, mounting since higher,
On wings of cherubims, than it did before.
Ang. Proud am I that my lady's modest eye
So likes so poor a servant.
Dor. I have offered
Handfuls of gold but to behold thy parents.
I would leave kingdoms, were I queen of some,
To dwell with thy good father; for, the son
Bewitching me so deeply with his presence,
He that begat him must do 't ten times more.
I pray thee, my sweet boy, show me thy parents;
Be not ashamed.
Ang. I am not: I did never
Know who my mother was; but, by yon palace,
Filled with bright heav'nly courtiers, I dare assure you,
And pawn these eyes upon it, and this hand,
My father is in heav'n: and, pretty mistress,
If your illustrious hour-glass spend his sand
No worse, than yet it doth, upon my life,
You and I both shall meet my father there,
And he shall bid you welcome.
Dor. A blessed day.

SIR GILES OVERREACH.

IN "A New Way to Pay Old Debts" the extortioner, Sir Giles Overreach, offers his daughter in marriage to Lord Lovell.

Overreach. To my wish we are private.
I come not to make offer with my daughter
A certain portion; that were poor and trivial:
In one word I pronounce all that is mine,
In lands or leases, ready coin or goods,
With her, my lord, comes to you; nor shall you have
One motive to induce you to believe
I live too long, since every year I'll add
Something unto the heap, which shall be yours too.
Lovell. You are a right kind father.
Over. You shall have reason
To think me such. How do you like this seat?

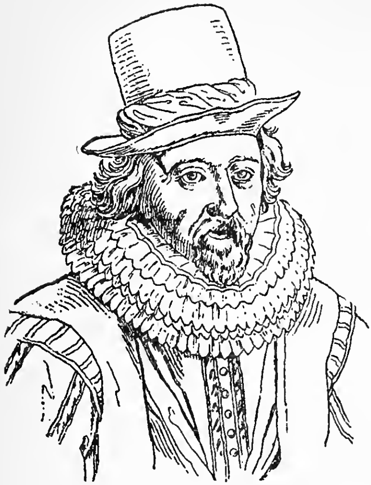
It is well-wooded and well-watered, the acres
Fertile and rich: would it not serve for change,
To entertain your friends in a summer's progress?
What thinks my noble lord?



Lov. 'Tis a wholesome air,
And well-built, and she, that is mistress of it,
Worthy the large revenue.
Over. She the mistress?
It may be so for a time: but let my lord
Say only that he but like it, and would have it;
I say, ere long 'tis his.
Lov. Impossible.
Over. You do conclude too fast; not knowing me,
Nor the engines that I work by. 'Tis not alone
The lady Allworth's lands: but point out any man's
In all the shire, and say they lie convenient
And useful for your lordship; and once more
I say aloud, they are yours.
Lov. I dare not own
What's by unjust and cruel means extorted:
My fame and credit are more dear to me,
Than so to expose them to be censured by
The public voice.
Over. You run, my lord, no hazard:
Your reputation shall stand as fair
In all good men's opinions as now;
Nor can my actions, though condemned for ill,
Cast any foul aspersion upon yours.
For though I do contemn report myself
As a mere sound; I still will be so tender
Of what concerns you in all points of honor,
That the immaculate whiteness of your fame,

Nor your unquestioned integrity,
Shall e'er be sullied with one taint or spot
That may take from your innocence and candor.
All my ambition is to have my daughter
Right honorable; which my lord can make her:
And might I live to dance upon my knee
A young lord Lovell, born by her unto you,
I write *nil ultra* to my proudest hopes.
As for possessions and annual rents,
Equivalent to maintain you in the port
Your noble birth and present state require,
I do remove that burden from your shoulders,
And take it on my own: for though I ruin
The country to supply your riotous waste,
The scourge of prodigals (want) shall never find you.
  Lov. Are you not frighted with the imprecations
And curses of whole families, made wretched
By your sinister practices?
  Over. Yes, as rocks are
When foaming billows split themselves against
Their flinty ribs; or as the moon is moved,
When wolves, with hunger pined, howl at her brightness.
I am of a solid temper, and, like these,
Steer on a constant course: with mine own sword,
If called into the field, I can make that right,
Which fearful enemies murmured at as wrong.
Now, for those other peddling complaints,
Breathed out in bitterness; as, when they call me
Extortioner, tyrant, cormorant, or intruder
On my poor neighbor's right, or grand encloser
Of what was common to my private use;
Nay, when my ears are pierced with widows' cries,
And undone orphans wash with tears my threshold;
I only think what 'tis to have my daughter
Right honorable; and 'tis a powerful charm,
Makes me insensible of remorse or pity,
Or the least sting of conscience.
  Lov. I admire
The toughness of your nature.
  Over. 'Tis for you,
My lord, and for my daughter, I am marble.

SIR FRANCIS BACON.



WITH serene consciousness of future fame, Bacon nobly said in his will: "For my name and memory, I leave it to men's charitable speeches, to foreign nations and the next ages." No better summary of his literary merits can be made than that of his friend Sir Tobie Matthew, who wrote thus: "A man so rare in knowledge of so many several kinds, endued with the facility and felicity of expressing it all in so elegant, so significant, so abundant, and yet so choice and ravishing a way of words, of metaphors, of allusions, as perhaps the world hath not seen since it was a world." This estimate has been endorsed by each successive generation as regards Bacon's style in the "Essays" and the lighter writings, such as the "New Atlantis." A different, but not less emphatic, stamp of approval has been put upon his contributions to philosophy and science, allowing for defects in his own vast intellectual powers as well as in his character. Burke fairly interprets the judgment of mankind when he asks, "Who is there that upon hearing the name of Lord Bacon does not instantly recognize everything of genius the most profound, everything of literature the most extensive, everything of discovery the most penetrating, everything of observation of human life the most distinguished and refined?" Yet the world will not forget the pithy character given by the satirist Pope when he styles Bacon "the wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind."

Francis Bacon, afterwards Baron Verulam and Viscount St. Albans, was born in London, January 22, 1561, son of Queen Elizabeth's lord keeper of the seals. His studies at Cambridge satisfied him that the methods of scientific investigation were all wrong. The system as applied to sciences, "many mechanical arts, . . . and even moral and civil philosophy and logic, rises but little above the foundations, and only skims over the varieties and surfaces of things." Hence his advocacy of the inductive method, to which progress owes so much. His philosophic temper brought him into early favor with his seniors, and through his uncle, Lord Burleigh, with the queen. Leaving the university in 1576, he became a law student, and spent some time abroad. His resolve to devote his life to the discovery of truth through study of natural law, and also to serve his country in some public capacity, was early frustrated for a time by the sudden death of his father in 1579, which left Bacon restricted in means. He took up the practice of law, but was under the necessity of borrowing money, a necessity which became a habit, possibly a vice, and it never left him. The powerful Cecils were not of much service to him at first. After his abilities had brought him success, and his parliamentary gifts made him prominent before he was twenty-five, patronage added to his fortune. At thirty Burleigh gave him the reversion of the clerkship to the Star Chamber, though it did not fall vacant till nearly twenty years had lapsed. In 1597 the publication of his "Essays" added to his fame, but political promotion was refused. His order of mind was too radical to suit the temporizing devices of the politicians, who distrusted his principles. They were afraid of their wisest and greatest man of state, and doubted his moral honesty. His share in the religious controversy, and especially his opposition to a measure directed against a certain conspiracy, damaged him as a good patriot in the eyes of the country. These matters and personal enmities militated against his advancement. The quarrel between the queen and Essex led many to blame Bacon for influencing Elizabeth, and for a time his life was in danger from popular violence. After her death he published a statement to allay that prejudice, and claimed the knighthood which his status had earned.

In 1605 Bacon published in English his "Proficience and Advancement of Learning, Divine and Human." It formed an introduction to the larger work in Latin, which was issued seventeen years later. By dedicating this to King James he hoped to gain substantial honors, but that realization was deferred. Two years had passed, during which he married, before he was appointed solicitor-general. The king would not act upon Bacon's counsels, coldly wise as they mostly were. It illustrates the fatal weakness which vitiated Bacon's moral nature, that he set about ingratiating himself with the king by complying with the royal whims against which his intellect rebelled. More promotions came in due course, for which he had to pay by such acts of dishonor as conniving at the torture of suspected persons, one a clergyman of seventy, for the purpose of humoring the king's revengeful designs against any who dared to criticise his schemes for extorting money from Parliament. He obtained more promotions and rewards by this lamentable subserviency, including the humiliation of great men who stood in his way. In 1617 Bacon held the lord-keepership, formerly the office of his father, and in 1618 he became lord chancellor, with the peerage. At last no fewer than twenty-eight charges were brought against Bacon for having taken bribes, and for other acts of corruption, to which he pleaded guilty in May, 1621. His confession was in writing, most abject in its completeness. It failed in its object, the remission of penalties, as Bacon was sentenced to pay a fine of £40,000, to remain in prison until it was paid, and be forever excluded from office. After four days in the Tower he was set free, and the rest of his life was spent in seclusion and comparative poverty. He busied himself with writing his "History of Henry VII," the "Apothegms," a partial translation of the Psalms, and with the revision of his "Essays." He died in April, 1626.

His great work, the "Instauratio Magna," which includes the "Novum Organum," was left incomplete. Of the value and influence of the sections issued it is superfluous to speak. It has been well said of his accomplishment in this, the worthier fruit of Bacon's strangely checkered life-work, that "it was he above all who gave dignity to the slow and patient processes of investigation, of experiment, of comparison, to the sacrifice of hypothesis to fact, to the single aim after truth, which was to be the law of modern science."

OF MARRIAGE AND SINGLE LIFE.

(From the "Essays," No. VIII.)

HE that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune; for they are impediments to great enterprises, either of virtue or mischief. Certainly the best works, and of greatest merit for the public, have proceeded from the unmarried or childless men; which, both in affection and means, have married and endowed the public. Yet it were great reason that those that have children should have greatest care of future times, unto which they know they must transmit their dearest pledges. Some there are, who, though they lead a single life, yet their thoughts do end with themselves, and account future times impertinences; nay, there are some other that account wife and children but as bills of charges; nay more, there are some foolish rich covetous men that take a pride in having no children, because they may be thought so much the richer; for, perhaps, they have heard some talk, "Such an one is a great rich man," and another except to it. "Yea, but he hath a great charge of children;" as if it were an abatement to his riches: but the most ordinary cause of a single life is liberty, especially in certain self-pleasing and humorous minds, which are so sensible of every restraint, as they will go near to think their girdles and garters to be bonds and shackles.

Unmarried men are best friends, best masters, best servants; but not always best subjects, for they are light to run away; and almost all fugitives are of that condition. A single life doth well with churchmen, for charity will hardly water the ground where it must first fill a pool. It is indifferent for judges and magistrates; for if they be facile and corrupt, you shall have a servant five times worse than a wife. For soldiers, I find the generals commonly, in their hortatives, put men in mind of their wives and children; and I think the despising of marriage among the Turks maketh the vulgar soldier more base.

Certainly wife and children are a kind of discipline of humanity; and single men though they may be many times more charitable, because their means are less exhaust, yet, on the other side, they are more cruel and hard-hearted (good to make severe inquisitors), because their tenderness is not so oft called upon. Grave natures, led by custom, and therefore constant, are commonly loving husbands, as was said of Ulysses, "vetulam suam prætulit immortalitati" [he preferred his old woman to immortality]. Chaste women are often proud and froward, as presuming upon the merit of their chastity. It is one of the best bonds, both of chastity and obedience, in the wife, if she think her husband wise; which she will never do if she find him jealous.

Wives are young men's mistresses, companions for middle age, and old men's nurses; so as a man may have a quarrel [reason] to marry when he will; but yet he was reputed one of the wise men, that made answer to the question when a man should marry:—"A young man not yet, an elder man not at all." It is often seen that bad husbands have very good wives; whether it be that it raiseth the price of their husband's kindness when it comes, or that the wives take a pride in their patience; but this never fails, if the bad husbands were of their own choosing, against their friends' consent, for then they will be sure to make good their own folly.

SOLOMON'S HOUSE.

(From the "New Atlantis.")

YE shall understand, my dear friends, that amongst the excellent acts of that king, one above all hath the preeminence. It was the erection and institution of an order or society which we call Solomon's House, the noblest foundation, as we think, that ever was upon the earth, and the lantern of this kingdom. It is dedicated to the study of the works and creatures of God. Some think it beareth the founder's name a little corrupted, as if it should be Solomona's House. But the records write it as it is spoken. So as I take it to be denominate of the King of the Hebrews, which is famous with you, and no stranger to us; for we have some parts of his works, which with you are lost; namely, that Natural History which he wrote of all plants, "from the cedar of Libanus, to the moss that groweth out of the wall," and of all things that have life and motion. This maketh me think that our king, finding himself to symbolize [agree] in many things with that king of the Hebrews which lived many years before him, honored him with the title of this foundation. And I am the rather induced to be of this opinion, for that I find in ancient records this order or society is sometimes called Solomon's House, and sometimes the College of the Six Days' Works; whereby I am satisfied that our excellent king had learned from the Hebrews that God had created the world, and all that therein is, within six days; and therefore he, instituting that house for the finding out of the true nature of all things, whereby God might have the more glory in the workmanship of them, and men the more fruit in the use of them, did give it also that second name.

When the king had forbidden to all his people navigation into any part that was not under his crown, he made nevertheless this ordinance: that every twelve years there should be sent forth, out of this kingdom, two ships appointed to several voyages; that in either of these ships there should be a mission of three of the fellows or brethren of Solomon's House, whose errand was only to give us knowledge of the affairs and state of those countries to which they were designed; and especially of the sciences, arts, manufactures and inventions of all the world; and withal to bring unto us books, instruments and patterns in every kind; that the ships, after they had landed the brethren, should return; and that the brethren should stay abroad till the new mission. These ships are not otherwise fraught than with store of victuals and good quantity of treasure to remain with the brethren, for the buying of such things and rewarding of such persons, as they should think fit. Now, for me to tell you how the vulgar sort of mariners are contained [kept] from being discovered at land; and how they that must be put on shore for any time color themselves under the names of other nations; and to what place these voyages have been designed; and what places of rendezvous are appointed for the new missions, and the like circumstances of the practique, I may not do it; neither is it much to your desire. But thus you see we maintain a trade, not for gold, silver, or jewels; not for silks; nor for spices; nor any other commodity of matter; but only for God's first creature, which was light; to have light, I say, of the growth of all parts of the world.

ATALANTA, OR GAIN.

(From "The Wisdom of the Ancients.")

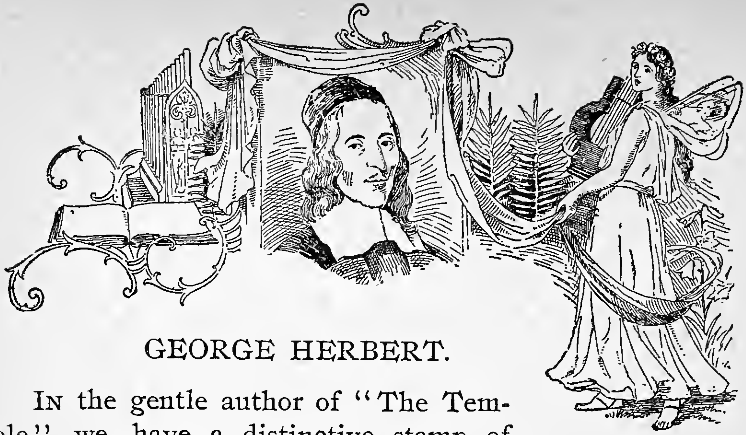
ATALANTA, who was reputed to excel in swiftness, would needs challenge Hippomenes at a match in running. The conditions of the prize were these: that if Hippomenes won the race, he should espouse Atalanta; if he were outrun, that then he should forfeit his life. And in the opinion of all the victory was thought assured of Atalanta's side, being famous as she was for her matchless and inconquerable speed, whereby she had been the bane of many. Hippomenes therefore bethinks him how to deceive her by a trick, and in that regard provides three golden apples or balls, which he purposely carried about him. The race is begun, and Atalanta gets a good start before him. He, seeing himself thus cast behind, being mindful of his device, throws one of his golden balls before her, and yet not outright, but somewhat of the one side, both to make her linger and also to draw her out of the right course; she, out of a womanish desire, being thus enticed with the beauty of the golden apple, leaving her direct race, runs aside and stoops to catch the ball. Hippomenes the while holds on his course, getting thereby a great start, and leaves her behind him; but she, by her own natural swiftness, recovers her lost time and gets before him again. But Hippomenes still continues his sleight, and both the second and third time casts out his balls, those enticing delays; and so by craft, and not by his activity, wins the race and victory.

This fable seems allegorically to demonstrate a notable conflict between art and nature; for art, signified by Atalanta, in its work if it be not letted and hindered, is far more swift than nature, more speedy in pace, and sooner attains the end it aims at, which is manifest almost in every effect; as you may see in fruit trees, whereof those that grow of a kernel are long ere they bear, but such as are grafted on a stock a great deal sooner. You may see it in clay, which, in the generation of stones, is long ere it becomes hard, but in the burning of bricks is very quickly effected. Also in moral passages you may observe that it is a long time ere, by the benefit of nature, sorrow can be assuaged and comfort attained; whereas philosophy, which is, as it were, art of living, tarries not the leisure of time, but doth it instantly and out of hand; and yet this prerogative and singular agility of art is hindered by certain golden apples, to the infinite prejudice of human proceedings; for there is not any one art or science which constantly perseveres in a true and lawful course, till it come to the proposed end or mark, but ever and anon makes stops after good beginnings, leaves the race, and turns aside to profit and commodity, like Atalanta.

"Declinat cursus, aurumque volubile tollit."

Who doth her course forsake,
The rolling gold doth take.

And therefore it is no wonder that art hath not the power to conquer nature, and by pact or law of conquest to kill and destroy her; but, on the contrary, it falls out that art becomes subject to nature, and yields the obedience as of a wife to her husband.



GEORGE HERBERT.

In the gentle author of "The Temple" we have a distinctive stamp of poet, as in his elder brother, who outlived him—Lord Herbert of Cherbury—we find a new type of philosopher. George was a younger son, without prospect of fortune, except through worldly-wise use of the advantages his opportunities as a poor courtier might offer. From his birth, in 1593, until he was appointed public orator for Cambridge University in 1619, his life was that of the average gentleman of the period. His frail constitution decided his mother to devote him to the church. The king had given him a sinecure to support his attendance at court. The death of King James and other titled patrons overcame Herbert's hesitation to take holy orders, and in 1626 he was appointed prebendary of Layton Ecclesia, in Huntingdonshire. He married while here, and in 1630 was given the living of Bemerton, near Salisbury, made famous in Izaak Walton's charming biography. Herbert died in 1633, in his fortieth year.

As a poet he holds his place by the serene beauty and purity of thought, which shines through much overlying verbiage, wrought into conceits affected by his inferiors in verse-making. His early poems charm with quaint freshness of fancy, despite their lack of ease. But when later he sang in his own proper note, meditative, aspiring after the higher Christian life, the full force of his genius expressed itself in measures that have not yet lost their power to cheer and solace. Herbert allures from the showy world to the truer delights of the contemplative life, lived in the quiet of a country village, sweetened by closer contact with nature, whose works he loved to sing about. And in the glory of Salisbury Cathedral, hard by his parsonage, he saw the emblem and possibilities of the nobler arts in their mission to lift the mind. His unaffected piety is still that of a pronounced Church of England devotee. He was an ideal parish parson, beloved by the poor, sparing no labor to promote their happiness or the advancement of the Church, and his flowing lines show his passion for the cathedral music. His chief work, called "The Temple; or, Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations," is made up of detached poems strung together, and often blending the sacred and secular in a way characteristic of himself.

AARON.

HOLINESS on the head,
Light and perfections* on the breast,
Harmonious bells below, raising the dead
To lead them unto life and rest:
Thus are true Aarons dressed.

Profaneness in my head,
Defects and darkness in my breast,
A noise of passions ringing me for dead
Unto a place where is no rest:
Poor priest, thus am I dressed.

Only another head
I have, another heart and breast,
Another music, making live, not dead,
Without Whom I could have no rest:
In Him I am well dressed.

Christ is my only head,
My alone-only heart and breast,
My only music striking me ev'n dead,
That to the old man I may rest,
And be in Him new-dressed.

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* The symbolical Urim and Thummim. See Exodus xxviii., 15-30.

So holy in my head,
Perfect and light in my dear breast,
My doctrine tuned by Christ, Who is not dead,
But lives in me while I do rest,
Come, people; Aaron's dressed.

THE QUIP.

THE merry World did on a day
With his train-bands and mates agree
To meet together where I lay,
And all in sport to jeer at me.

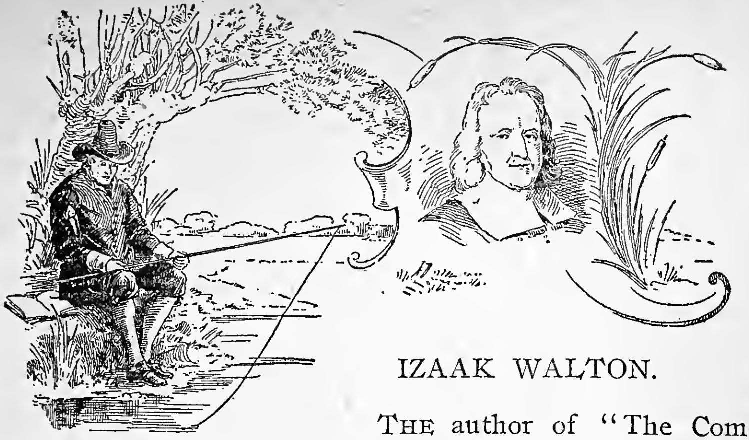
First Beauty crept into a rose,
Which when I plucked not, "Sir," said she,
"Tell me, I pray, whose hands are those?"
But Thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.

Then Money came, and chinking still,
"What tune is this, poor man?" said he:
"I heard in Music you had skill;"
But Thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.

Then came brave Glory puffing by
In silks that whistled, who but he?
He scarce allowed me half an eye;
But Thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.

Then came quick Wit and Conversation,
And he would needs a comfort be,
And, to be short, make an oration:
But Thou shalt answer, Lord for me.

Yet when the hour of Thy design
To answer these fine things shall come,
Speak not at large; say, "I am Thine,"
And then they have their answer home.



IZAAK WALTON.

THE author of "The Complete Angler" was a prosperous business man of London, a linen draper in the wholesale trade. He was six years old when Queen Elizabeth died, in 1603, and he himself passed away, at the age of ninety, in the early part of the reign of James II. Of the record of his life it may be said as was said of another: "He lived only for himself and his friends, and amongst his friends he was able to name almost every man of his times whom wit or elegance had raised to reputation." Walton wrote the lives of five of these great men, among others that of his brother-in-law, Bishop Thomas Ken (1637–1711), the author of the long metre doxology, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

But his reputation as an author does not rest on these "Lives," however felicitously they may have been written. His fame is founded on that inimitable work, "The Complete Angler," which has been the pocket companion of so many wits, and the delight of many a quiet philosopher, contented and obscure. The first edition of this celebrated book was published in 1653, when the author was sixty years of age, and he lived to see it go through five editions. The practical part of the work seems to have been suggested by a tract, written in 1496, by Dame Juliana Berners, Prioress of the Nunnery of Sopwell, near St. Albans, and entitled, "The Treatyse of Fysshinge with an Angle." This tract was part of a book known to the curious in typographical antiquities as "The Book of St. Albans." The work was of extreme rarity until lately reprinted, but was doubtless well known to Walton. His moral reflections and quotations were evidently suggested by Montaigne; and in the one modest volume which forms the bulk of the work there are citations from no less than forty-four authors, classic, mediæval, and what was then modern.

"The Complete Angler" gives minute instructions concerning the selection and preparation of bait, the location of trout streams and of gentle English rivers, filled with larger fish, suitable weather, the auspicious month, the timely hour, the artful lure. Nay, more, it condescends to cookery, until our nostrils are tantalized with the smell of frying trout, or "pike baked very leisurely and basted with claret wine and anchovies and butter mixed together."

But the chief charm of the book lies not in its fisherman's lore, its quaint erudition, nor even its happy selections. Its fascination consists in the unveiling of a quiet mind. Here was a man who lived in the heart of London during the most stirring epochs of English history, yet nothing is more remarkable about his delightful book than the absence of all allusion to heated debate, civil strife, battles, bloodshed, the overthrow of a dynasty, the beheading of a king, the founding of a commonwealth, the death of Cromwell, the return of Charles. Its pages breathe only of quiet lawns, dewy lanes, still streams, the hearty human satisfaction of congenial companionship, rustic shelter, simple fare,—cheerfulness, contentment, benevolence, faith in the goodness of man, and the goodness of God, a sustained serenity, an abiding peace. As we close the volume our involuntary farewell to the gentle fisherman is—

"Oh, be my friend!
And teach me to be thine."

"The Complete Angler" passed through five editions in the author's lifetime. To the last (1676) a Second Part was added by his adopted son, Charles Cotton (1630–1687), the translator of Montaigne.

The Angler's Song.

I WOULD you were a brother of the Angle, for a companion that is cheerful, and free from swearing and scurrilous discourse, is worth gold. I love such mirth as does not make friends ashamed to look upon one another next morning; nor men, that cannot well bear it, to repent the money they spend when they be warmed with drink. And take this for a rule, you may pick out such times and such companies, that you may make yourselves merrier for a little than a great deal of money; for "'Tis the company and not the charge that makes the feast:" and such a companion you prove; I thank you for it. But I will not compliment you out of the debt that I owe you, and therefore I will begin my song, and wish it may be so well liked.

As inward love breeds outward talk,
The hound some praise, and some the hawk:
Some, better pleased with private sport,
Use tennis, some a mistress court:
　　But these delights I neither wish
　　Nor envy, while I freely fish.

Who hunts, doth oft in danger ride;
Who hawks, lures oft both far and wide;
Who uses games shall often prove
A loser; but who falls in love
　　Is fettered in fond Cupid's snare:
　　My angle breeds me no such care.

Of recreation there is none
So free as fishing is alone;
All other pastimes do no less
Than mind and body both possess:
　　My hand alone my work can do,
　　So I can fish and study too.

I care not, I, to fish in seas,
Fresh rivers best my mind do please,
Whose sweet calm course I contemplate,
And seek in life to imitate:

In civil bounds I fain would keep,
And for my past offences weep.

And when the timorous trout I wait
To take, and he devours my bait,
How poor a thing sometimes I find
Will captivate a greedy mind:
And when none bite, I praise the wise,
Whom vain allurements ne'er surprise.

But yet, though while I fish I fast,
I make good fortune my repast;
And thereunto my friend invite,
In whom I more than that delight:
Who is more welcome to my dish,
Than to my angle was my fish.

As well content no prize to take,
As use of taken prize to make:
For so our Lord was pleaséd when
He fishers made fishers of men:
Where, which is in no other game,
A man may fish and praise his name.

The first men that our Saviour dear
Did choose to wait upon him here,
Blest fishers were, and fish the last
Food was, that he on earth did taste.
I therefore strive to follow those,
Whom he to follow him hath chose.

NOTHING BETTER THAN ANGLING.

No life, my honest scholar, no life so happy and so pleasant as the life of a well-governed angler; for when the lawyer is swallowed up with business, and the statesman is preventing or contriving plots, then we sit on cowslip-banks, hear the birds sing, and possess ourselves in as much quietness as these silent silver streams, which we now see glide so quietly by us. Indeed, my good scholar, we may say of angling, as Dr. Boteler said of strawberries: "Doubtless God could have made a better berry, but doubtless God never did;" and so, if I might be judge, God never did make a more calm, quiet, innocent recreation, than angling.

THE BLESSING OF CONTENTMENT.

WELL, scholar, having now taught you to paint your rod, and we having still a mile to Tottenham High-Cross, I will, as we walk towards it, in the cool shade of this sweet honeysuckle hedge, mention to you some of the thoughts and joys that have possessed my soul since we two met together. And these thoughts shall be told you, that you may also join with me in thankfulness to "the Giver of every good and perfect gift," for our happiness. And, that our present happiness may appear to be the greater, and we the more thankful for it, I will beg you to consider with me, how many do, even at this very time, lie under the torment of the stone, the gout, and tooth-ache; and this we are free from. And every misery that I miss is a new mercy: and therefore let us be thankful. There have been, since we met, others that have met disasters of broken limbs; some have been blasted, others thunderstruck; and we have been freed from these, and all those many other miseries that threaten human nature; let us therefore rejoice and be thankful. Nay, which is a far greater mercy, we are free from the unsupportable burthen of an accusing tormenting conscience; a misery that none can bear: and therefore let us praise Him for his preventing grace, and say, Every misery that I miss is a new mercy. Nay, let me tell you, there be many that have forty times our estates, that would give the greatest part of it to be healthful and cheerful like us; who, with the expense of a little money have ate and drank, and laughed, and angled, and sung, and slept securely; and rose next day, and cast away care, and sung, and laughed, and angled again; which are blessings rich men cannot purchase with all their money.

Let me tell you, scholar, I have a rich neighbor, that is always so busy that he has no leisure to laugh: the whole business of his life is to get money, and more money, that he may still get more and more money; he is still drudging on, and says that Solomon says, "The diligent hand maketh rich;" and it is true indeed: but he considers not that 'tis not in the power of riches to make a man happy; for it was wisely said by a man of great observation, "That there be as many miseries beyond riches, as on this side them." And yet God deliver us from pinching poverty, and grant, that having a competency, we may be content and thankful. Let not us repine, or so much as think the gifts of God unequally dealt, if we see another abound with riches; when, as God knows, the cares that are the keys that keep those riches, hang often so heavily at the rich man's girdle, that they clog him with weary days and restless nights, even when others sleep quietly. We see but the outside of the rich man's happiness: few consider him to be like the silkworm, that, when she seems to play, is, at the very same time, spinning her own bowels, and consuming herself. And this many rich men do; loading themselves with corroding cares, to keep what they have, probably, unconscionably got. Let us, therefore, be thankful for health and a competence, and above all, for a quiet conscience.

SIR JOHN SUCKLING.

THIS typical gay cavalier presents the most pitiful example of the irony of fate in the chronicles of the poets. Suckling was born rich—enormously rich—and he possessed all the natural gifts that insure a man good friends and true. He had a handsome person, was free-handed with his money, a gay wit, the best athlete and gamester in court circles, and displayed an enviable proficiency in verse. With these rare endowments Suckling scorned poetic fame, and yet it is by his careless verse that his name will live.

He was born near London in 1609. At nineteen he scoured Europe in quest of adventure, and fought for the King of Sweden in Silesia. Real war bored the fickle young poet. He returned to London, and was fairly successful in his mad endeavors to dissipate his fortune, one of the largest of the time. Masques were losing their popularity, and the idea occurred to Suckling to adapt their spectacular adjuncts to the ordinary drama; hence he wrote the play "Aglaura," which is said to be first that was produced with elaborate scenery. There is little besides Suckling's easy versification to attract the modern reader. His comedy, "The Goblins," is a livelier piece in every respect. Two serious plays remain, one incomplete; but their only charm is in the songs they contain. In the Civil War Suckling equipped a troop of a hundred horsemen at his own expense, and led them to fight the Scotch Covenanters in 1639. Next year he was elected member for Bramber in the Long Parliament; but a few months later a charge of treason was raised against him, alleging his share in a plot for Strafford's escape and to call French aid. He fled the kingdom, and is believed to have fallen into the clutches of the Spanish Inquisition; his suicide, by poison, in 1642, being attributed to enfeebled sanity, resulting from the tortures inflicted on him. The play of his lightsome genius is seen at its best in his airy but manly lyrics, a few of which are among the most felicitous examples of English verse at its best.

A BALLAD UPON A WEDDING.

THE wedding was that of Roger Boyle, Lord Broghill (afterwards Earl of Orrery), with Lady Margaret Howard.

I tell thee, Dick, where I have been,
Where I the rarest things have seen;
    Oh, things without compare!
Such sights again cannot be found
In any place on English ground,
    Be it at wake or fair.

At Charing-Cross, hard by the way,
Where we (thou know'st) do sell our hay,
    There is a house with stairs;
And there did I see coming down
Such folk as are not in our town,
    Forty at least, in pairs.

Amongst the rest, one pest'lent fine
(His beard no bigger though than thine)
    Walked on before the best:
Our landlord looks like nothing to him:
The King (God bless him) 'twould undo him,
    Should he go still so dressed.

At Course-a-Park, without all doubt,
He should have first been taken out
By all the maids i'th' town:
Though lusty Roger there had been,
Or little George upon the Green,
Or Vincent of the Crown.

But wot you what? the youth was going
To make an end of all his wooing,
The parson for him stayed:
Yet by his leave (for all his haste)
He did not so much wish all past
(Perchance), as did the maid.

The maid (and thereby hangs a tale),
For such a maid no Whitsun-ale
Could ever yet produce:
No grape, that's kindly ripe, could be
So round, so plump, so soft as she,
Nor half so full of juice.

Her finger was so small, the ring
Would not stay on, which they did bring,
It was too wide a peck:
And to say truth (for out it must)
It looked like the great collar (just)
About our young colt's neck.

Her feet beneath her petticoat,
Like little mice, stole in and out,
As if they feared the light:
But Oh, she dances such a way!
No sun upon an Easter-day
Is half so fine a sight.

Her cheeks so rare a white was on,
No daisy makes comparison,
(Who sees them is undone),
For streaks of red were mingled there,
Such as are on a Catherine pear,
The side that's next the sun.

Her lips were red, and one was thin,
Compared to that was next her chin
(Some bee had stung it newly);

But, Dick, her eyes so guard her face,
I durst no more upon them gaze
Than on the sun in July.

Her mouth so small, when she does speak
Thou'dst swear her teeth her words did break,
That they might passage get;
But she so handled still the matter,
They came as good as ours or better,
And are not spent a whit.

Just in the nick the cook knocked thrice
And all the waiters in a trice
His summons did obey;
Each serving-man, with dish in hand,
Marched boldly up, like our trained band,
Presented and away.

When all the meat was on the table,
What man of knife or teeth was able
To stay to be intreated?
And this the very reason was,
Before the parson could say grace,
The company was seated.

The business of the kitchen's great,
For it is fit that men should eat;
Nor was it there denied:
Passion o' me, how I run on!
There's that that would be thought upon,
(I trow) besides the bride.

Now hats fly off, and youths carouse;
Healths first go round, and then the house,
The bride's came thick and thick;
And when 'twas named another's health,
Perhaps he made it hers by stealth;
And who could help it, Dick?

On the sudden up they rise and dance;
Then sit again and sigh, and glance:
Then dance again and kiss.
Thus several ways the time did pass,
Whilst every woman wished her place,
And every man wished his.

RICHARD LOVELACE.

THIS cavalier poet was born in 1618, to wealth and high station. As a boy he was a pet of royalty. He was of fine presence, being nicknamed Adonis, was proficient in manly sports, could sing and play, and was conversant with the classic poets. He served as a soldier, and in his abundant leisure wrote plays and poems, the latter to please his Queen, Henrietta. When Parliament quarreled with the King Lovelace presented a petition to the Commons in Charles's interest and was therefore thrown into the Westminster jail. He immortalized that short experience by writing in his cell the famous verses to Althea. He had to find £40,000 bail, on which he was liberated on parole for the duration of the war. He was imprisoned again in 1648 for having raised a regiment for the French king. The next year he published a collection of his poems as "Lucasta," his pet name for his mistress. After this we are in the dark as to his life. He had spent his fortune in the interest of the king. Lucasta, otherwise Lucy Sacheverell, married another lover on being misinformed of the poet's death in the siege of Dunkirk. Certain it is that Lovelace ended his days in a slum, short of the necessaries of life. This was in 1658, when he was only forty. Yet he had adorned lyrical poetry with a few gems which suffice to distinguish his name among the brightest.

GOING TO THE WARS.

TELL me not, sweet, I am unkind,
  That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
  To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
  The first foe in the field,
And with a stronger faith embrace
  A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
  As you too shall adore,—
I could not love thee, dear, so much
  Loved I not honor more.

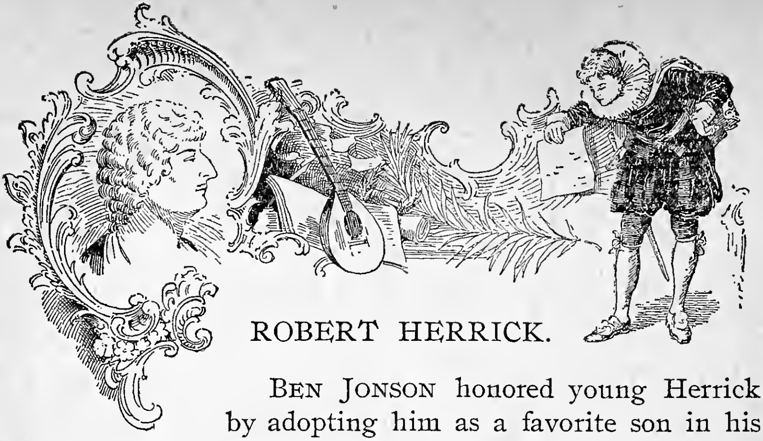
To Althea from Prison.

When love with unconfinéd wings
Hovers within my gates,
And my divine Althea brings
To whisper at the grates;
When I lie tangled in her hair,
And fettered to her eye,
The birds that wanton in the air
Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round
With no allaying Thames,
Our careless heads with roses bound,
Our hearts with loyal flames;
When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
When healths and draughts go free,
Fishes that tipple in the deep
Know no such liberty.

When, like committed linnets, I
With shriller throat shall sing
The sweetness, mercy, majesty,
And glories of my King;
When I shall voice aloud, how good
He is, how great should be,
Enlargéd winds that curl the flood
Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage;
If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty.



ROBERT HERRICK.

Ben Jonson honored young Herrick by adopting him as a favorite son in his poetic family. He was born in London in 1591, and trained at Cambridge for the Church. After ten years probably spent more in the service of the world than the Church, he settled as a country parson in Devonshire for twenty years, and was then ejected by the Puritans in 1648. He was restored to his old vicarage in 1662, and there stayed till his death in 1674, aged eighty-three.

Never was a less fit worldling given the cure of souls, yet many a holy man would have proved a worse parson than this spiritually "empty singer of an idle day." Herrick was a typical man of the world, a cavalier by temperament and purpose, a convivial enjoyer of variegated life up to the limits of his Arcadian environment. When he was turned out of his rural parsonage, he went up to London and there published the "Hesperides: or, Works both Human and Divine," for his music had her serious moods. There are some thirteen hundred pieces in his lyrical output, most of them short, many of them unworthy of his art, and some unfit to appear. But after the weeding of these there remains a nosegay of choicest blooms, sparkling with the pure dew of May mornings in the country, as fragrant, fresh, and delightful as can be gathered from the world's garden.

To the Virgins.

Gather ye rose-buds while ye may:
  Old Time is still a-flying;
And this same flower that smiles to-day,
  To-morrow will be dying

The glorious lamp of heaven, the Sun,
The higher he's a-getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
The nearer he's to setting.

That age is best, which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer;
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times, still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,
And while ye may, go marry;
For having lost but once your prime,
You may for ever tarry.

The Bag of the Bee.

About the sweet bag of a bee
Two Cupids fell at odds;
And whose the pretty prize should be
They vowed to ask the Gods.

Which Venus hearing, thither came,
And for their boldness stripped them;
And taking then from each his flame,
With rods of myrtle whipped them.

Which done, to still their wanton cries,
When quiet grown she'd seen them,
She kissed and wiped their dove-like eyes,
And gave the bag between them.

The Litany.

In the hour of my distress,
When temptations me oppress,
And when I my sins confess,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When I lie within my bed,
Sick in heart, and sick in head,
And with doubts discomforted,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the house doth sigh and weep,
And the world is drowned in sleep,

Yet mine eyes the watch do keep,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the artless doctor sees
No one hope, but of his fees,
And his skill runs on the lees,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When his potion and his pill
Has or none or little skill,
Meet for nothing but to kill,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the passing-bell doth toll,
And the furies in a shoal
Come to fright a parting soul,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the tapers now burn blue,
And the comforters are few,
And that number more than true,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the priest his last hath prayed,
And I nod to what is said,
'Cause my speech is now decayed,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When, God knows, I'm tossed about,
Either with despair or doubt;
Yet, before the glass be out,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the tempter me pursu'th
With the sins of all my youth,
And half damns me with untruth,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the flames and hellish cries
Fright mine ears, and fright mine eyes,
And all terrors me surprise,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the Judgment is revealed,
And that opened which was sealed,
When to Thee I have appealed,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

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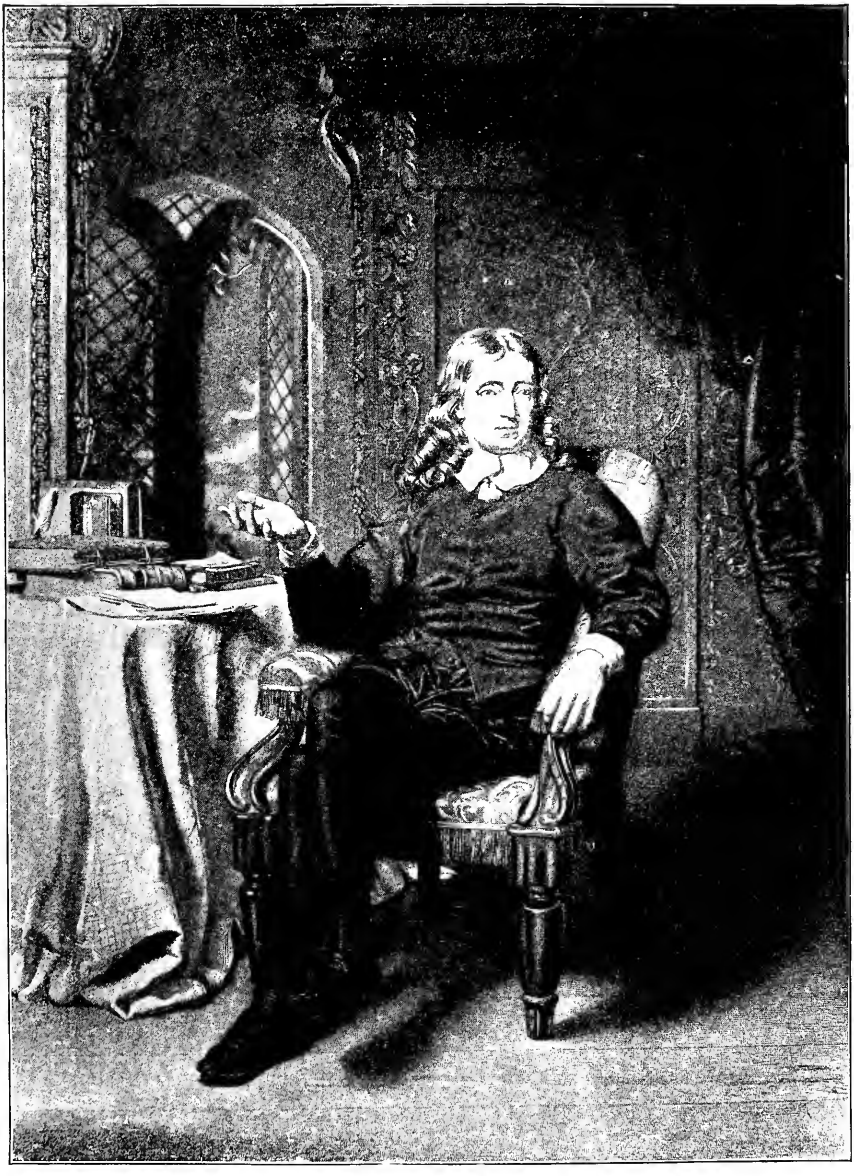
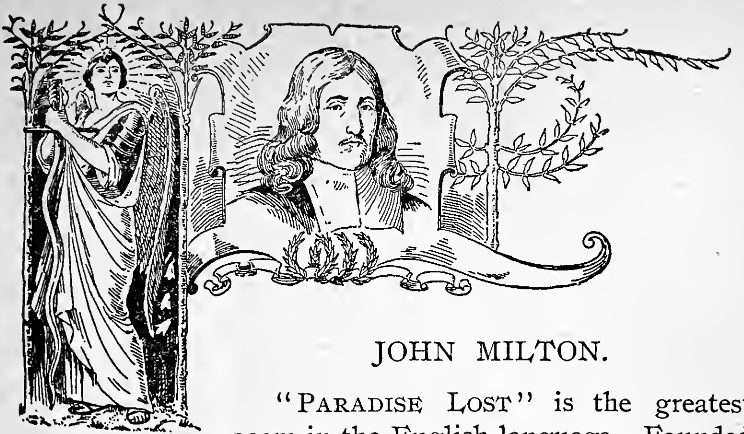


JOHN FAED, PINX

JOHN MILTON



JOHN MILTON.

"PARADISE LOST" is the greatest poem in the English language. Founded on a theme of universal interest—the entrance of evil into this world—ranging in scene from Heaven to Hell, introducing as actors their inhabitants, from the Almighty Father to the Arch-rebel Satan, harmonious and dignified in structure and style, this poem must be acknowledged to be the greatest of the world's epics. Other sweet and lofty poems by the same author would suffice to give him fame and high rank in the singing tribe. Yet he was not only a noble bard, but a participant in public affairs in one of the greatest crises in English history, and a champion of free thought and open discussion. Though his party was overthrown, and his merits were long looked at askance, his enemies have been compelled to do homage to his genius.

John Milton was born in London in December, 1608, the son of a scrivener, who had originally been a Roman Catholic. He received an excellent classical education, and went to Christ's College, Cambridge, where seven years were spent in delightful studies. From his personal beauty, as well as the strict purity of his morals, he was known as "the Lady of Christ's College." His early poems were chiefly in Latin, and among the English were a magnificent Christmas ode and some sonnets. Finding that he could not subscribe the oaths required in order to become a clergyman, Milton took his degree of M. A. in 1632, and retired to Horton, near Windsor, where his father then resided. His intense enjoyment of this rural retreat is shown in his exquisite companion-pieces, "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso." His love of music and the drama led to his composing the pastoral masques, "Arcades" and the more fanciful "Comus" for representation at castles in the vicinity. The graceful elegy "Lycidas" was called forth by the untimely fate of Edward King, a fellow of his college. These brilliant poems of his early manhood were enough to prove that a star of the first magnitude had arisen in the English literary heaven.

In 1638 Milton visited Italy, which was still the centre of culture and refinement, and was cordially received by the learned. There he saw the aged Galileo, and enjoyed the friendship of the venerable Marquis Manso, who had been the protector of Tasso. Rumors of war summoned the wanderer home, yet on his return he did not immediately take part in the stirring controversies of the time. Settling in London, he taught his orphan nephews while he sketched plans for sacred dramas, one of which was to be "Paradise Lost." The poet's dreams were disturbed by Parliamentary struggles over reforms in church and state, and he descended into the dusty field of strife to advocate the abolition of episcopacy. For twenty years of middle life his writing was entirely in prose, the most famous example being "Areopagitica," the eloquent plea for liberty of the press. Others were tracts in favor of greater freedom for divorce, in defence of the action of Parliament establishing the Commonwealth, and in reply to the "Eikon Basilike," written by Dr. Gauden, but published in the name of King Charles as his dying testimony to his rebellious subjects. Milton's name was made widely known on the Continent by his reply in Latin to the scholar Salmasius, who had arraigned England before the civilized world for murdering her king. Milton was one of the secretaries to the Council of State, and even after his total loss of sight he was Latin secretary to Cromwell.

The fabric held together by the might of the great Protector fell after his death. Milton had urged a republican government, but the nation gravitated back to royalty. Though the republican pamphleteer was arrested and prosecuted and some of his books ordered to be burnt by the hangman, the new king disdained to take vengeance on an "old blind schoolmaster." Within a few years this disregarded scholar, though fallen on evil times, was to confer new glory on his country by composing the greatest of his works, in which he essayed "to justify the ways of God to men." "Paradise Lost" was published in 1667, and for two editions of it the author received altogether £10, but he won immortal fame. In the poem there are evident traces of the author's acquaintance with Cædmon's Paraphrase (doubtless through his friend Francis Junius) and with the Dutch poet Vondel's attempts at the same scriptural theme. But none the less, it is thoroughly original, embodying the intense Biblical religion of the time, as Dante's "Divine Comedy" presents the mediæval Catholic faith. In this noblest literary monument of the Puritan period the great theme of the Fall of Man is treated with the utmost grandeur of imagination. Heaven, Earth, and Hell are all concerned, and all are freely opened to the poet's vision. The early Christian view of the Fall of Satan, already poetized by the Saxon monk Cædmon, is again presented, impressed with all the wealth of classical allusion and mythology. Adam, newly created, and his brief sojourn in Paradise with his lovely consort Eve are depicted with the sweetly picturesque power of Milton's youth. The tremendous tragedy of the expulsion is relieved by the Archangel Michael's vision of the Future, which includes the Redemption of Man through the coming of Christ.

Yet Milton's Quaker friend Elwood suggested that the Redemption should be separately treated, and the poet, perhaps unwilling to attempt this greatest of all conflicts in full, chose to present part of Christ's battle with Satan by taking as a new theme the Temptation in the Wilderness. He is even said to have preferred his "Paradise Regained" to its great predecessor. But the sequel, though full of proofs of his poetic skill, is felt to be but an episode, not a complete epic. In the same volume with it appeared his tragedy "Samson Agonistes." In this last great product of his genius the author had worked out his early idea of a sacred drama, formed on the principles of the Greek tragedians. It was a parable of himself, sightless, with the Philistines revelling in their strength at his impotence, and those of his own household failing him in his helpless age. It was also an allegorical presentation of his belief in the Divine judgment awaiting the leaders of the nation who had defeated and put to shame the champions of God and truth. After having delivered this warning message to his countrymen, Milton died in 1674, aged sixty-six.

SHAKESPEARE.

(An epitaph on the admirable dramatic poet, William Shakespeare.)

WHAT needs my Shakespeare for his honored bones
The labor of an age in pilèd stones?
Or that his hallowed relics should be hid
Under a star-ypointing pyramid?
Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?
Thou in our wonder and astonishment
Hast built thyself a livelong monument.
For whilst, to the shame of slow-endeavoring art,
Thy easy numbers flow, and that each heart
Hath, from the leaves of thy unvalued book,
Those Delphic lines with deep impression took,
Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,
Dost make us marble with too much conceiving:
And, so sepulchred, in such pomp dost lie,
That kings for such a tomb would wish to die.

L'ALLEGRO.

HASTE thee, nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful Jollity,
Quips and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods and becks, and wreathed smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides.
Come and trip it as you go
On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty:
And, if I give thee honor due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,

To live with her and live with thee,
In unreproved pleasures free:
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And singing startle the dull night,
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come, in spite of sorrow
And at my window bid good-morrow,
Through the sweet-brier, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine;
While the cock with lively din,
Scatters the rear of darkness thin,
And to the stack, or the barn door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft list'ning how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill:
Sometimes walking not unseen
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate,
Where the great Sun begins his state,
Robed in flames and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight,
While the ploughman near at hand
Whistles o'er the furrowed land,
And the milk-maid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale,
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
   And ever against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running;
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumbers on a bed

Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite set free
His half-regained Eurydice.
These delights, if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

THE ASSEMBLING OF THE FALLEN ANGELS.

(From "Paradise Lost," Book I.)

ALL these and more came flocking; but with looks
Downcast and damp, yet such wherein appeared
Obscure some glimpse of joy, t' have found their chief
Not in despair, t' have found themselves not lost
In loss itself; which on his countenance cast
Like doubtful hue: but he, his wonted pride
Soon recollecting, with high words that bore
Semblance of worth, not substance, gently raised
Their fainting courage, and dispelled their fears.
Then straight commands that, at the warlike sound
Of trumpets loud and clarions, be upreared
His mighty standard; that proud honor claimed
Azazel at his right, a cherub tall;
Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled
The imperial ensign, which full high advanced,
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
With gems and golden lustre rich emblazed
Seraphic arms and trophies, all the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds:
At which the universal host upsent
A shout, that tore Hell's concave, and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
All in a moment through the gloom were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the air
With orient colors waving: with them rose
A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms
Appeared, and serried shields in thick array,
Of depth unmeasurable; anon they move
In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood
Of flutes and soft recorders; such as raised
To highth of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle; and, instead of rage,

Deliberate valor breathed, firm and unmoved,
With dread of death, to flight or foul retreat;
Nor wanting power to mitigate and 'suage,
With solemn touches, troubled thoughts, and chase
Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sorrow, and pain,
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they
Breathing united force, with fixed thought
Moved on in silence to soft pipes, that charmed
Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil; and now
Advanced in view they stand, a horrid front
Of dreadful length, and dazzling arms, in guise
Of warriors old with ordered spear and shield,
Awaiting what command their mighty chief
Had to impose: he through the armėd files
Darts his experienced eye, and soon traverse
The whole battalion views, their order due,
Their visages and statures as of gods;
Their number last he sums. And now his heart
Distends with pride, and hard'ning in his strength
Glories; for never, since created man,
Met such embodied force as, named with these,
Could merit more than that small infantry
Warred on by cranes, through all the giant brood
Of Phlegra with the heroic race were joined,
That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
Mixed with auxiliar gods; and what resounds
In fable or romance of Uther's son,
Begirt with British and Armoric knights;
And all who since, baptized or infidel,
Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,
Damasco or Morocco, or Trebizond;
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore,
When Charlemagne with all his peerage fell
By Fontarabia. Thus far these beyond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observed
Their dread commander; he above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tower; his form had not yet lost
All her original brightness, nor appeared
Less than Archangel ruined, and th' excess
Of glory obscured: as when the sun new risen
Looks through the horizontal misty air,

Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs. Darkened so, yet shone
Above them all th' Archangel: but his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrenched, and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage and considerate pride,
Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse and passion to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather,
(Far other once beheld in bliss) condemned
Forever now to have their lot in pain;
Millions of spirits for his fault amerced
Of Heaven, and from eternal splendors flung
For his revolt, yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory withered: as when Heaven's fire
Hath scathed the forest oaks, or mountain pines,
With singed top their stately growth, though bare,
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared
To speak: whereat their doubled ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half inclose him round
With all his peers: attention held them mute.
Thrice he essayed; and thrice, in spite of scorn,
Tears such as angels weep, burst forth; at last
Words interwove with sighs, found out their way.

Eve's Account of Her First Day.

(From "Paradise Lost," Book IV.)

"That day I oft remember, when from sleep
I first awaked, and found myself reposed
Under a shade of flowers, much wondering where
And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound
Of waters issued from a cave, and spread
Into a liquid plain, then stood unmoved,
Pure as the expanse of Heaven; I thither went
With inexperienced thought, and laid me down
On the green bank, to look into the clear
Smooth lake, that to me seemed another sky.
As I bent down to look, just opposite,

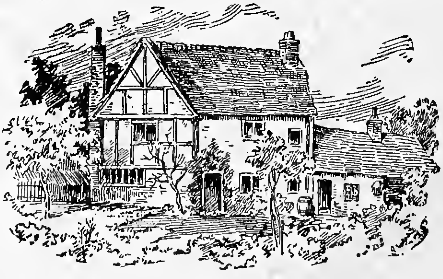
A shape within the watery gleam appeared,
Bending to look on me; I started back,
It started back; but pleased I soon returned,
Pleased it returned as soon with answering looks
Of sympathy and love: there I had fixed
Mine eyes till now, and pined with vain desire,
Had not a voice thus warned me: 'What thou seest,
What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself;
With thee it came and goes; but follow me,
And I will bring thee where no shadow stays
Thy coming and thy soft embraces; he
Whose image thou art; him thou shalt enjoy,
Inseparably thine; to him shalt bear
Multitudes like thyself, and thence be called
Mother of human race.' What could I do,
But follow straight, invisibly thus led?
Till I espied thee, fair indeed and tall,
Under a plantain; yet methought less fair,
Less winning soft, less amiably mild,
Than that smooth watery image: back I turned;
Thou following criedst aloud, 'Return, fair Eve,
Whom flyest thou? whom thou flyest of him thou art,
His flesh, his bone: to give thee being I lent,
Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart,
Substantial life to have thee by my side
Henceforth an individual solace dear;
Part of my soul, I seek thee, and thee claim
My other half.' With that thy gentle hand
Seized mine; I yielded, and from that time see
How beauty is excelled by manly grace
And wisdom, which alone is truly fair."
  So spake our general mother, and with eyes
Of conjugal attraction, unreproved,
And meek surrender, half embracing leaned
On our first father; half her swelling breast
Naked met his under the flowing gold
Of her loose tresses hid; he in delight
Both of her beauty and submissive charms,
Smiled with superior love, as Jupiter
On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds
That shed May flowers, and pressed her matron lip
With kisses pure.

ON HIS BEING ARRIVED AT THE AGE OF TWENTY-THREE.

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
Stolen on his wing my three-and-twentieth year!
My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,
That I to manhood am arrived so near,
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
That some more timely-happy spirits indu'th.
Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
It shall be still in strictest measure even
To that same lot, however mean or high,
Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heaven;
All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great Task-master's eye.

ON HIS BLINDNESS.

WHEN I consider how my light is spent,
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent, which is death to hide,
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He, returning, chide;
"Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?"
I fondly ask: but Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
Either man's work, or His own gifts; who best
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best: His state
Is kingly; thousands at His bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait."



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